The M.P. for Russia

REMINISCENCES & CORRESPONDENCE OF

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF

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THE M.P. FOR RUSSIA

Olga Novikoff.

1907. "O. K."

s.B.
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Novikova. Ol'ga Alekseevna

The M.P. for Russia

REMINISCENCES & CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF

EDITED BY

W. T. STEAD

VOLUME TWO

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THE M.P. FOR RUSSIA

PART IV.

1878–1908.

CHAPTER I.

The Aftermath of the War.

NO sooner was the Russo-Turkish War at an end than we were confronted by its hateful sequence in the shape of war in Afghanistan and an insurrection in Macedonia.

When Lord Beaconsfield was menacing Russia with war in Europe, and secretly preparing an expedition of Indian troops to seize Cyprus, with or without the consent of the Sultan, to hold it as place d'armes against the Tsar, the Russians on their side had been preparing to make reprisals. By an agreement between Russia and England, entered into when Mr. Gladstone was in office, Afghanistan was recognised as a territory in the British sphere of interest within which Russia undertook not to interfere. No Russian agent was accredited to Cabul. The Ameer was subsidised and armed by the Indian Government, in order to enable him to hold Afghanistan as a buffer state, independent, but in friendly relations with the British.

So long as Russia and England were at peace and in friendly relations, this agreement, excluding Russian influence from Afghanistan, was loyally observed. But when Russia was openly menaced with war, when the arsenals of England were ringing with preparations for armaments to be used against Russia, and when thousands of Indian troops were being conveyed to Europe in readiness to attack the Russian armies in Bulgaria, the obligation to refrain from intervention in Afghanistan lost much of its force. By way of preparation for the threatened attack in Europe, the Russian Government dispatched General Stolietoff with a small Russian escort on a "mission of courtesy" to Cabul. When peace was made in Europe, the Stolietoff mission was withdrawn from Afghanistan; and there, so far as Russia was concerned, the incident came to a close.

With us, it was not the end. It was rather the beginning of a war which for wantonness and stupidity has few parallels even in the long list of similar crimes. Ever since Lord Lytton had been sent out as Viceroy, to proclaim the Queen as Empress of India, that unquiet spirit had been pining for an opportunity to rectify the north-western frontier of India. Rectification of frontier then, as always, was a euphemism for stealing a slice of our neighbour's territory. According to the original fantasy which was born in the fevered brain of the Forward school, Afghanistan was to be reduced to the position of a vassal state, in fact if not in name. A British envoy was to be sent to Cabul, and British officers were to occupy positions of vantage at Candahar and elsewhere. Shere Ali, the Ameer, a man moody of disposition, like Saul the King of Israel, with no David to soothe his evil temper by skilful harping, soon discovered

the danger which menaced him from beyond the passes. He became suspicious and unfriendly. The more the signs of his unfriendliness multiplied, the more obvious appeared to Lord Lytton and his school the need for rectifying the frontier. All projects of the kind were, however, postponed by the outbreak of the Russian war with Turkey, which at the same time diverted the attention of the British to the Near East, and suggested to the Russians the possibility that they might have to prepare for war with England in Asia as well as in Europe. Shere Ali, sullen, distrustful, and alarmed, anxious only for his own independence and the integrity of his country, had no more love for the Russians than for the British. But as the latter were menacing his independence, he could not help casting his eyes towards the Central Asian steppes, from whence the shadow of the Great White Tsar stretched dark across the hills.

When the Treaty of Berlin was signed, July 13, and war was averted, General Stolietoff had been a month on the road from Samarcand to Cabul. He arrived at Cabul, and was formally received by Shere Ali on August 11.

Ministers revelling in the short-lived triumph, which they had labelled Peace with Honour, were suddenly confronted with the spectre of a Russian General welcomed with honour at Cabul by Shere Ali, who had always refused to receive a British officer in his capital.

The sane and reasonable policy to pursue was to have asked Russia for the explanations which she would have found it easy to give. General Stolietoff would have been recalled, and everything would have gone on as before. This policy, however, did not commend itself to the British Government. It was

too cruel a commentary upon their high-flown boasting for them to accept such a humiliation without show of resentment. They did not wish to attack Russia, so they determined to fasten a quarrel upon the luckless Shere Ali.

"To run into something cheap," said Mr. Bright, "is the cynical order which the coachman receives when the horses have bolted." The Jingo party at home was furious at the betrayal of its confidence by the Government. Its counterpart in India, hungering for a "scientific frontier" and prestige in Central Asia, would not be denied. So it came to pass that in September Sir Neville Chamberlain, with a force of 1000 men, "too large for an escort and too small for an army," was ordered to proceed to Cabul. His advance was stopped at the mouth of the Khyber Pass, and the pretext for another disastrous war in Afghanistan was created of which Lord Lytton and the Forward school took such advantage that it was not until the middle of 1880 Lord Lytton's successor was able to evacuate the country.

While the Indian Government was preparing for the invasion of Afghanistan, Madame Novikoff returned to London and at once resumed her useful task of enlightening the British public as to what the Russians thought of them and of their policy in Europe and Asia. Before her arrival, as already mentioned, she had been in communication with Mr. Gladstone on the subject of the Rhodope Commission.

I had written to Mr. Gladstone enclosing a memorandum from Madame Novikoff about the Commission which had reported on the Rhodope insurrection, and at the same time had asked for his opinion as to whether the reception of the Russian mission by the Ameer justified, in his opinion, hostile action against

Afghanistan. He answered on September 18, the same day Sir Neville Chamberlain had left Peshawur on his abortive mission to Cabul:—

"*September* 18, 1878.

"My Dear Sir,—Your question was addressed to me last week, I presume because you felt puzzled, and I am puzzled as to a reply; but simply because we are in the dark as to the facts. I think, however: (1) that the *Daily News* has been extremely precipitate in affirming the necessity of going forward while so much in the dark; (2) that it should be examined how far our sending a force to Quettah was compatible with the understanding entered into with Russia as to our respective spheres of influence; (3) whether our conduct may have released Russia from her pledges, and given her a distinct cause of complaint; (4) whether coercion against Afghanistan is wise or warrantable; (5) whether interference with the Ameer's independence is not as bad as coercion.

"This morning I have your note with the enclosure from Madame Novikoff. It is clear, and gives more information as to the Commission than I had previously received. But I do not think it satisfactory. The writer admits that the French Commissioner is a good man, and says that he is the author of the report.—Yours faithfully, W. E. Gladstone.

"The Liberal candidate for Truro expects to win."[1]

When the news came that Sir Neville Chamberlain had been turned back, I advocated strongly the holding of meetings of protest against another Afghan war. I wrote to Mr. Chamberlain among others on

[1] The Liberal candidate was disappointed. He did not win, but he reduced the Tory majority from 230 to 45.

the subject. As his reply shows, he had not made up his mind and deprecated public agitation:—

"In reply to the question in your letter, I doubt whether a series of public meetings on the Indian policy could at present be held with advantage. I take it that the general feeling is, first, that the necessity has been forced upon us of resenting the conduct of Shere Ali with regard to the proposed mission; and secondly, one of intense disgust at the previous action of the Government which has made so undesirable an expedition unavoidable. No doubt the letter of Lord Lawrence[1] is a most important contribution to the discussion, but I am not myself disposed to take the responsibility of saying that the insult could safely be passed unnoticed. We do not know in England enough of the feelings of the people of India to decide this question. On the other hand, it is perfectly competent for us to take Mr. Fawcett's line and insist that the cost of the war shall be borne by England.

"There is no doubt that the enormously increased expenditure of the Government will soon have a very quieting effect on the Jingoes."

Madame Novikoff contributed three articles to the *Northern Echo* in October: one on the effect of England's policy in Europe upon Russia, the second upon the threatened Afghan war, and the third upon the insurrection in Macedonia. But before she began to write she renewed her acquaintance with Thomas Carlyle, as the following letter shows, dated Symonds's Hotel, October 6:—

[1] Lord Lawrence had written to the *Times* maintaining that we ought not to go to war with the Ameer.

"I spent a charming couple of hours with dear old Carlyle. We walked together, we drove in an omnibus. He then brought me to my hotel and begged to come any day I liked 'before three—then we'll have another drive, but in a carriage, which is supposed to be a kind of promotion. You know I never thought last year I'll see you again. So strange that I am still alive,' said he. The dear old man! He seemed really, actually glad to see me, and repeatedly said so! I asked whether he had heard from you. 'Oh, merely when there was something written by you in his paper, and I am very thankful to the editor for not failing to send it me. It is most excellent. But politics are a sore subject nowadays. With our *damnable* Premier one is ashamed of what is going on.'"

Her friends warmly encouraged her journalistic efforts. She wrote me :—

"*October* 23, 1878.

"Hayward says in his note : 'I have read both the letter and the leading article on it with much pleasure. I entirely agree with you throughout. The part we are playing is pitiable and contemptible. England is represented by a charlatan. But it is to be hoped that the exposure will come sooner or later.'

"Froude is not less friendly : 'The O. K. is as good as it can be. Alas! I fear my countrymen are *Fey*—as the Scotch call it.'

"I went to see Carlyle yesterday. No sooner did he see me than he exclaimed : 'Ay, ay, I think your article very good and interesting. I am not going to pay you any compliment, but it is perfectly true. I did not know the anecdote about Frederic William, but it answers to his character. He used to say : "Look straight in my face when I am speaking to you."'"

The anecdote about Frederic William was that of his beating a man with his walking-stick to teach him to love him. Madame Novikoff used this to illustrate the British method of securing the friendship of Shere Ali.

Canon Liddon wrote from Oxford on October 22 :—

"I have just been reading your letter in the *Northern Echo* of October 21 with true interest and sympathy. To me it is perfectly natural that the Russian people should be indignant with us. We English have behaved as badly as possible. We have been, *as a nation*, by turns blustering, suspicious, abusive, cynical, everything that tends to promote ill-will. The Russians would be angels if they did not think us something very unlike angels indeed.

"One or two sentences in your letter make me bold to express to you the hope that you will not lightly abandon your wish of promoting reconciliation and peace. You may well lose heart; and yet, all real good that is done in this world is done in the face of difficulties. I think you underrate the amount of sympathy which is still felt for Russia in England—especially in church and religious circles. For many of us the cause of Russia is still the cause of Christendom in Eastern Europe. I have always regretted any prominence which has been given to the Pan-Slavonic aspects of the Eastern Question. That aspect does not interest other races, and it puts the whole matter on a *lower* level than that which it ought to occupy. The real point is that Russia has upheld the interests of the downtrodden *Christian* peoples, and in course of time this will be acknowledged.

"You will, I hope, be able to prolong your visit

into December, when I shall be in residence at St. Paul's. It will be a great pleasure to see you, and to do anything that can be done for the promotion of friendly feelings among peoples who ought to be fast friends."

Professor Tyndall, whose enthusiastic regard for Madame Novikoff had never extended to her politics, wrote with more reserve. Here are two of his notes called forth by two of her articles in October :—

"Many thanks for the article. My feelings as regards the present relationship of England and Russia are of the most vague and general kind. But there is no vagueness about the wish that both Powers might allow the predominance of reason instead of passion, so far as to arrange their difficulties without invoking the infernal machinery of war."

"I have read your article through, though, as regards politics, my mind has rather lost its ease. The suspicious, tremulous, inhospitable England pictured in your letter is not the England known to me."

Mr. Gladstone was more of Canon Liddon's way of thinking than of Professor Tyndall's. Writing on October 25, he says :—

"In haste *en route* to Cambridge. Thence on to Hawarden. Many thanks. Letter read with great interest. For me any communication is valuable in proportion as it is plain spoken. This was the rule and boast of my country, and in the main still is. Therefore I am heartily glad not only when the absolute truth is told us but when that is told us which is honestly believed to be the truth.

It would have been well if there had been at *the outset* many of the same mind." [1]

Madame Novikoff was much more interested in the rising in Macedonia which immediately followed the signature of the Berlin Treaty than in the Afghan imbroglio. Her article on the subject was the first note that was sounded in this country in favour of the unfortunate Macedonians. It was defiant and uncompromising. It began thus :—

"Another insurrection in Turkey! Rising of the Bulgarians! As I read these words I am filled with conflicting emotions. As a Russian I blush. I foresee with dread the new torrents of blood, the new victims of a struggle for that liberty which we promised to achieve for them."

[1] Mr. Gladstone was much impressed by the force and lucidity with which Madame Novikoff stated the case against the invasion of Afghanistan. Addressing his constituents at the Corn Exchange, Edinburgh, six years later, he made the following reference to the subject :—

"If anything could have made the ambition of Russia really formidable, it was undoubtedly to throw the people of Afghanistan by our hostile measures into the arms of the Emperor of Russia. A Russian lady of great ability—a very clever political writer, known as Madame Novikoff—published an excellent book written from a Russian point of view—very properly written from a Russian point of view, for she was a Russian lady. She said this : 'You are dreadfully afraid of us Russians lest we should interfere with you in India. You had got a double barrier between us and India—you had a moral barrier—a human barrier of a brave people who for many years had been attached to you. You had also the great physical barrier of a mass of mountains ; and behind this double barrier you might have felt tolerably secure. What, what have you done ? The moral barrier you have destroyed, and taught the Afghans to hate you. And really one might believe that if you could, you would have destroyed the physical barrier also. But, happily, those mountains, like the *Hindu Koosh* which encircle Afghanistan on every side, are a great deal too big to shovel away, and you still enjoy the safety that you get from the existence of a great physical barrier between us and Afghanistan!'"

It ended with this challenge to the English to justify their professions of sympathy for the Slavs :—

"Whether the Russian Government likes it or not, whether once more our officials try above all to soothe Lord Beaconsfield's feelings, 'Bulgaria, United and Free from the Danube to the Ægean,' will be the battle-cry of the struggle which has now commenced. Again I ask, 'Put to this new test, what will the free, humanitarian, the noble England do?' Now the Slavs want deeds, not merely words. 'Enough of compliments!' Energetic, active sympathy is now wanted."

Mr. Freeman was sympathetic, but he could not resist putting in a word for his Greek protégés. He wrote :—

"*November* 15, 1878.

"Bulgaria should have an Ægean port, so should the Turk when he is sent back to Iconium. But neither should have a long strip of Greek seaboard. I don't object to giving Thessalonica to Bulgaria—a cosmopolite city which may as well be one thing as another; only Greece must have Hadrianople and—New Rome.

"What is coming? More conferences? Anyhow, God help the Macedonians. I get back to my old psalm of 1875—

"'Let the praises of God be in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hands;

"'To be avenged of the heathen and to rebuke the people;

"'To bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with links of iron.'

"And, above all things, to follow the example

of the discreetest of the Pharaohs, and *to hang the chief Baker!*"

I asked Mr. Freeman to write something about the Macedonian revolt. He replied (October 27):—

"I have been looking at the papers, and talking with Mme Novikoff, and I really do not as yet find materials for writing anything about the last Bulgarian revolt. I have simply no facts."

He had facts and to spare before the year was out, when twenty thousand hapless Bulgarian refugees fled in despair from their burning homes in Macedonia, to seek safety within the Principality. But the public had supped full of horrors, and, excepting Madame Novikoff's protest, the atrocities that attended the restoration of Turkish despotism in South-West Bulgaria passed almost unnoticed. Nearly thirty years had to pass before the British Government could be roused to intervene, with effect, on behalf of the hapless province which Russia had freed but which Lord Beaconsfield had re-enslaved.

The misadventures which befell Austria-Hungary that autumn, when she discovered that Bosnia was more of a hornet's nest than a beehive, did not excite much sympathy in England. Mr. Freeman, whose detestation of Austria-Hungary knew no bounds, wrote at the end of September:—

"I live in hopes of a blow-up of the whole Kaiserliche Königliche concern, of which this Bosnian business is the beginning. Then we may get rid of the Ogre as well as the Turk."

M. de Laveleye, on the other hand, stoutly maintained that for these provinces there was no hope of

salvation except by means of an Austrian occupation. Writing to Madame Novikoff, who then, as now, regarded Austria-Hungary as an enemy of the Slavonic Cause, the champion of the Jesuits, and the oppressor of the Orthodox, M. de Laveleye said :—

"Will you or will you not free Bosnia? If you hesitate, read what Mr. Evans[1] writes about Macedonia.

"How to free Bosnia? By the intervention of Russia? Impossible. Make an independent state of her? Again impossible.

"Give it to Servia? Very seductive—but two obstacles.

"Firstly, necessity for the Servians to stand in awe of the Mussulman. Secondly, Bosnia remains separated by her seacoast—which is indispensable to her—from Dalmatia.

"Moreover, one must see what is possible: Austria will never consent to leave this great Servia next to Montenegro and Croatia—*never!*

"Her freedom is only possible through Austria.

"Moreover, Austria will of necessity bring them order, security, schools, roads—the elements of civilisation. She will never be able to Catholicise them.[2] Therefore the future is theirs.

"That is my theory. Alas! in this world one cannot do as one likes."

At the end of October, Colonel Mure, M.P. for Renfrewshire, made a speech in which he quoted Mr. Bright as having stated that if the Liberals had been in office they would have gone to war with

[1] Mr. Evans, Mr. Freeman's son-in-law, had exposed the state of these provinces in the *Fortnightly Review* and in the *Manchester Guardian*.

[2] M. de Laveleye was too sanguine. The Jesuits claimed in 1908 that there were 400,000 Roman Catholics in the two provinces.—*Fortnightly Review*, December 1908.

Russia. Madame Novikoff, appalled at this alleged repudiation of the confidence she had assured her countrymen could be placed in the English Liberals, wrote in distress to Mr. Gladstone, seeking consolation from that never-failing fount. Mr. Gladstone replied at once :—

"HAWARDEN, *November* 1, 1878.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I have read the speech of Col. Mure with great dissatisfaction, although I did not find in it the sentiment which has disturbed you, and I can hardly believe he uttered it. First, he knows nothing of the Liberals, and what they would have done, but from their public declarations; and next, these are directly the opposite of the statement ascribed to him. I cannot suppose he uttered it; but whether he did or not, it is idle and worthless. Had the Liberals been in power, so far as I can estimate their ideas, they never would have had to *consider* the question of making war in Russia, for they would most certainly have used every effort to organise thoroughly the Concert of Europe for the purpose of obtaining the needful concessions from Turkey. Another thing *I* certainly for one should have been much disposed to do: to object to any preliminary settlement between the three Emperors, and to have claimed for England and the other Signatory Powers of 1856 a fair and equal start.

"The meeting I attended at Rhyl last night was very large and very enthusiastic. There is much uncertainty in all unverified opinions, but my opinion is that this Government is moving to its doom, and I hope the day of Lord Granville's succession to it may be within a twelvemonth: it is not to be desired that this would take place at once. The people want a little more experience of Beaconsfieldian Toryism.

"I fear I shall not be in town before the end of the month.—Believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Gladstone's speech at Rhyl brought up Mr. Freeman indignant. He wrote (November 5):—

"In Gladstone's speech at Rhyl, he implied that in 1856 nearly everybody thought that 'Turkey' could be reformed under the Turk. Now I knew better in 1855. Look at my *History and Conquests of the Saracens*, p. 200 (2nd edition) to the end. The case is the simplest in the world. With any Mahometan power, it is a matter of religious duty to place its non-Mahometan subjects below its Mahometan subjects. Contemptuous toleration is all that it can give. When contemptuous toleration is the law, the practice is sure to be something worse. Therefore, no Mahometan power can reform, as all Westerns understand reform. It must put its non-Mahometan subjects (at the very best) in a position which justifies revolt at any moment. A Christian power may be, at any particular moment, as bad as the Mahometan power, or worse—some have been; but nothing hinders it from reforming, and all such have reformed more or less. I have said all this over and over again. But then I knew it all in 1855, which seemingly Gladstone did not."

It would be interesting to know what Mr. Freeman would say of the prospect of Constitutionalism in Turkey in 1908.

Mr. Gladstone returns again to Colonel Mure. Writing on November 14, he says:—

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—On receiving your letter I wrote to Bright, who disclaims the state-

ment of Col. Mure. It appears that this Colonel, hastily (it was nothing worse), first misunderstood him, then improperly quoted in public his private conversation, but without his name, and then by mistake let the *Daily Telegraph* have his name. Thus it is that work is made for those who have already enough and too much to do. I felt sure that Bright had not been guilty of such absurdity.

"Col. Mure is, I believe, a well-meaning man, but he belongs to the Military Caste of whom only a very small minority are liberal and sensible politicians. You in Russia must know pretty well what they are.

"Lord Beaconsfield has again shown of what stuff he is made by using your Emperor's prudent and gentlemanlike intimation as enabling him to offer an insult with safety. You may have seen my letter in the *Echo* or his speech. If not, I will send it you. I am firmly of opinion that the Powers whose Agents have signed the Rhodope Report are bound in honour —which, you know, is everything with our Ministers!! —not to let it drop, but to consider what steps to take upon it. I think the French and Italian signatures carry weight. I shall have, I fear, a long polemical speech to make on the 30th.—Yours most faithfully,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Novikoff would very much have preferred that Mr. Gladstone should have left the Rhodope Report alone. But this was not the only occasion on which Mr. Gladstone allowed his desire to achieve a debating point at the expense of his political opponents to carry him into lines of argument which were not much appreciated in Russia.

When Shere Ali, the Ameer of Afghanistan, received the Russian mission, Mr. Gladstone contended

Photograph by Elliott & Fry.]

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, 1878.

that if the incident afforded any *casus belli*, "we ought to have declared war, not on the Ameer, who was weak, but upon Russia, who was strong." Mr. Gladstone would not have gibed at the Government in that fashion if there had been even an off-chance that they would have taken him au sérieux. But in Russia, M. Martens, one of the most Anglophile of observers, actually supposed that Mr. Gladstone advocated war with Russia in opposition to Lord Beaconsfield, who declared that the conduct of Russia had been perfectly correct!

It may also be assumed, without any uncharitableness, that Mr. Gladstone was not altogether sorry for an opportunity of parading the fact that he was not the pro-Russian that his opponents described him. An extraordinary access of caution overtook him. He was announced to make a great speech at Greenwich, and Madame Novikoff innocently asked him for a ticket. Whereupon Mr. Gladstone wrote her the following letter :—

"HAWARDEN, *November* 24, 1878.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I fear you must think I was very discourteous in omitting to offer to procure you a ticket for Greenwich. But I so acted advisedly. You have no conception of the suspicious and false imputations with which I am dogged, and it is my positive duty to consider their effect in marring the purposes for which I am endeavouring to contend. A simple, innocent act like that would be magnified and coloured so as to do much mischief. I think your course is plainer to write to the Hon. Secretary, as a Russian, or as a foreign lady who has taken a deep interest in the question, and to ask from him the ticket or tickets

you desire to have. But I am bound to ask you not to name me in doing this, although I am only acting as a finger-post. I know not how your matters are, but ours are very grave, and their grave condition is owing to the Government.—Yours sincerely,

" W. E. GLADSTONE.

" Mr. Stead, I should think, would be willing and able to serve you."

There is a great contrast between his reluctance to do a " simple, innocent act " like sending Madame Novikoff a ticket to a public meeting, and the ostentatiously defiant way in which he offered her his arm and led her out of the St. James's Hall Conference in 1876.

But his caution on this one occasion—Mr. Gladstone was ever only cautious in spots—did not lead him to write less freely or less frequently. In two letters in December he went over the old ground :—

" 73 HARLEY STREET,
December 4, 1878.

" DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—There can be no doubt that your function here has been—as far as I have had the means of judging—that of a peacemaker. There is no office more blessed. I want, therefore, no assurances, and you have every title to speak to me.

" I can easily conceive that my statements about Russia, given succinctly, might, by loose interpretation, be made offensive. But I think you will find they have been exactly measured by me.

" In my opinion, the mission to Cabul was a departure from the agreement with the late Government. I expected Russia would say that was an

agreement between friendly Governments; and we have a right to depart from it. I have said nothing in criticism of such a reply. But the answer that it was a 'mission of courtesy,' therefore not within the scope of the agreement, does not satisfy me.

"As to Rhodope, I have not either given or formed an opinion about cruelties committed by Russians, although I have a strong opinion of the well-attested and signal humanity they had shown in the war of 1877. But I cannot pass by the subject in silence—not because of the vile abuse with which I am covered by Layard and others on account of it; but rather because of my obligation to do strict justice, and to consider those of my countrymen who are minded like the writer of the enclosed: a person quite unknown to me. I hold it to be the duty of our Government not to shirk the subject, but to probe it; and when assured of the truth, or of the best truth they can find, to decide what course they should pursue.—Believe me yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Misfortune makes strange bedfellows, and the grief and dismay occasioned by the Afghan policy of Lord Lytton led the late Earl Grey, who lived in seclusion in his Northumbrian seat, to express more sympathy with Mr. Gladstone than as an old Whig he usually felt towards the popular leader. On receiving from the old Earl a letter approving of Mr. Gladstone's course, I mentioned the fact in one of my letters to Hawarden. The following was Mr. Gladstone's reply:—

"*November* 2, 1878.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Many thanks. I am greatly pleased with all I have seen and read of Lord Grey.

If he has found cause to think more favourably of my proceedings, it gives me deep gratification. At the same time, he is one of those whose displeasure I can always bear without anger, because any emotion of that kind is at once suppressed by my admiration for his unflinching courage and unvarying rectitude of purpose.—Yours faithfully. W. E. G."

Mr. Freeman criticised the work of the Berlin Congress in an article called "The Three Treaties," which he contributed to the *British Quarterly Review*. Popular interest, however, had now shifted from the Balkan to Afghanistan, and Mr. Freeman was rather disappointed that his article excited so little attention. Writing to me on October 30, 1878, to express a hope that the people would veto the Afghan War, he said :—

"If anything can save us, it must be Scotland and Old Northumberland against Jingoborough (London).

"Mme Novikoff was of course delighted with 'Three Treaties,' and Bryce read it while he was with me a little time back. Whether anybody else has seen it I know not."

The question as to what course should be taken by the opponents of what they believe to be an unjust war—after that war has been declared—had often been discussed when Lord Beaconsfield was menacing Russia with war. It came up for practical decision in 1878, when as unjust a war as was ever waged was going on in Afghanistan. It was destined to come up still more acutely during the Boer War of 1899–1902.

Experience shows that no matter how many men may protest against the injustice of a war before it is begun, "when the guns begin to shoot," the most of them can be relied upon to rally round the flag of their

own country, no matter how hateful the cause in which it is raised. The Irish Nationalists were almost the only Members of Parliament who considered it right to vote against supplies for the War in South Africa. When the question came up on the vote for the Afghan War, Mr. Freeman wrote me as follows, December 11, 1878 :—

"I have not got to Gladstone's speech yet, but in Monday's debate, no one, in either House, had argued out this very simple bit of reasoning. This war at present is the private crime of the Jew and his accomplice. If we agree to pay for it, we make it our own crime instead of theirs. And Lord Hartington offers congratulations on victory—that is, on successful murder. That wooden idol must be pulled down and the right man set in his place again.

"In a good state of things, the Jew and the rest, as the criminals, would be handed over to the Afghans, and the action would be guiltless. Then we might have 'Peace with Honour.'"

Much in the same vein wrote Sir G. W. Cox on Christmas Eve :—

"I am horrified at seeing that even the *Spectator* is putting forth the monstrous doctrine that, because Roberts has sustained a reverse, we cannot withdraw from Afghanistan without reconquering Cabul. We know the precept, 'Cease to do evil : learn to do well.' This says, 'Learn to do well, but first show the people whose country you have unjustly invaded that you are as mighty for iniquity as ever, by doing one still more gigantic wrong before you begin to set up as saints.'

"Such talk as this is simply loathsome.

"If we have not done wrong, let us stick up for our innocence or our righteousness. But if we have done wrong, is it really absolutely impossible for us to confess before the world that we have done wrong? The wrong was done before the world: the confession should be made in like manner.

"It all comes round to Beaconsfield—a wickeder man than Strafford, though not so able.

"No doubt *you* will insist that our paramount duty is to quit Afghanistan without committing more sins against a people whom we have wronged unpardonably already."

Sir G. W. Cox was right in counting upon my support. Believing that it is always safer to do right rather than to persist in doing wrong, and believing also that England is strong enough to dare to confess her sin and make reparation to those whom she has injured, I was a Stop-the-War man in 1878 as I was afterwards in 1899. But although our agitation enabled some of us to clear our consciences, we might as well have tried to stop the tides or the motion of the stars.

To the grief and shame and humiliation induced by this painful demonstration of our utter impotence to prevent the wickedest of wars in Asia there was added in November a hideous, although fortunately only a momentary, dread lest the Government might pick a quarrel with Russia over the Rhodope Commission. It was but for a moment. Lord Beaconsfield's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet showed that he was in no mood to press that matter further. How deep was the general uneasiness that pervaded the minds of many of the best men who groaned under the Beaconsfieldian rule may be inferred from two letters written

in November 1878—one by Bishop Fraser of Manchester, the other by the Principal of one of the most important Nonconformist training colleges.

Bishop Fraser wrote :—

"I have never been an admirer of the Berlin Treaty nor of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, but I must confess that things have got into such a quagmire of confusion that I fail to see my way to any satisfactory solution of the multiform and ever-increasing difficulties.

"It has been, and still is, as you say, 'a terrible time,' full of the very gravest anxieties on every side. Both at home and abroad, in Europe and in Asia, in our domestic condition and our foreign relations, the outlook is equally dark and dreary. How men can think that 'a war with Russia' would mend matters, is to me inexplicable. What we seem to want is not 'peace with honour(s),' but 'peace *with confidence*.' At present, confidence seems utterly destroyed."

The Principal of the Nonconformist College wrote, November 10 :—

"One thing I curse and curse and curse, to wit, this godless, low, unrighteous quack spirit that possesses not only our actual rulers but also, I fear, the greater part of the people. It bodes ill for the future, and it depresses me so much that I avoid reading newspapers as far as I can."

He had previously written me in a similar strain :—

"What a queer thing high English Society must be at this moment, to go into ecstasies about such an impudent liar as Lord Beaconsfield. It really makes one ask a great many very disturbing questions about

various things—amongst others, as to the influence of Christianity and the Christian Church among us. I fear we are getting rotten at the top again. At the same time I must say that Madame Novikoff sees things too blackly. Russia has accomplished a great deal for the East, and by consenting to recede from a vantage ground where she might have let ambition run riot, has really secured herself benefits in the future.

"The Continent, or at all events Germany, is a very uncomfortable place to be in now. The suspicion, discomfort, restlessness that prevail are sad. Many feel as though some great catastrophe were impending."

Madame Novikoff republished her letters of 1878 in a pamphlet entitled *Friends or Foes?* Mr. James Bryce, now Ambassador at Washington, wrote me when the pamphlet appeared, saying :—

"Her second set of letters are even better than the first were, full of fire and brilliance. I trust things are taking a turn for the better with you in the North. In London the improvement is very slight so far.

"It is a great pity that more has not been done to expose the lies of this preposterous 'Rhodope report.'"

Mr. Kinglake wrote to Madame Novikoff on December 29, 1878 :—

"I have not seen any comments on your last publication, but this is no proof that there has not been going on a raging *controversy about the merits of Miss O. K.* If it should turn out that your publication is not attracting so much attention as you might wish, the reason would be—not any want of power in the writer, but—that the subject of 'Russia' is somewhat 'worn out.' The bulk of the people here

do not willingly dwell for any great length of time upon foreign affairs unless there is some war going on to accentuate the arguments. The most faithful of the 'Russianisers' whom you, 'Miss,' helped to pervert, is Hayward, and he is ready to do battle at any moment for Russia, declaring her to be quite virtuous and all the rest of it, with no other fault than that of being *incomprise*."

Mr. Gladstone wrote :—

"*December* 12, 1878.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—Thanks in anticipation for the Pamphlet. Written as you, I believe, always write, I think it cannot but do good.

"I had always regarded the mission to Cabul as an act done by the Russian Government in consequence of the disturbed relations between the two countries. If placed on that ground, I had not a word to say against it. The distinction between the different kinds of mission appeared to me inadmissible. My skill in diplomacy, you will perceive, is small.

"My wife is suffering from a temporary inconvenience in one of her eyes.—With all good wishes from us both, I remain very faithfully yours,

"W. E. Gladstone.

"Notice the election of yesterday in a Tory stronghold." [1]

Of *Friends or Foes?* the Rev. Malcolm MacColl wrote :—

"I have been recommending your little book everywhere. It is charming and brilliant—more so, I think, in some respects than your previous volume —no light praise."

[1] Maldon, where a Tory majority of 113 in 1874 was converted into a Liberal majority of 141 in 1878.

Friends or Foes? may not have made as much sensation as her first book, *Is Russia Wrong?* for the reason stated by Mr. Kinglake—Russia no longer preoccupied public attention. But those who read it were emphatic in their commendation. Mr. Carlyle was a very appreciative reader of all that "the Rooshian leddy" wrote. Madame Novikoff saw much of him this visit, and he was always full of encouragement. She wrote to me on November 29 :—

"Carlyle and Froude came to take leave of me. The first, most kind, brought me his *Frederic,* wrote down his name with his dear old trembling hand. Leaving the room he said, 'Well, I'm sure your pamphlet will have a great success.' 'Oh no,' replied I : 'last year's had Mr. Froude's preface, which secured a second edition ; this one has no introduction whatever.' 'It is quite unnecessary,' decided dear Carlyle, and *kissed my hand!!*"

When Madame Novikoff left London to return to Moscow at the end of the year 1878, "an English friend of the Christians of Turkey and of their Champion Russia" published in the *Bolton Evening Guardian,* December 6, a versified tribute to "a noble Russian lady, who has used her extraordinary knowledge of England, its people and its language, and the persuasive charm of her literary eloquence, in the cause of a good understanding between England and Russia."

The following are a few of the verses :—

"To ——, ON HER RETURN HOME TO MOSCOW, DECEMBER 1878.

"We have in thee an honest, candid friend,
Whose charms of heart and mind combine to lend
All that's most needful to a fair review
Of what we're *thinking,* and of what we do.

Thou know'st our language and our mode of thought;
Thy quick perception, too, hath truly caught
The subtlest workings of our inmost heart.

Oh! that our country knew thy native land,
As thou know'st England to her farthest strand;
Then might we labour in the common cause
Of vindication of God's brightest laws.

But thou, dear daughter of a misknown race—
Whose blood has watered every time and place
Of all the hist'ry of the Turk's foul rule
(Thus learning Freedom in her hardest school)—
Thou, whose brave brother sacrificed his life
In Timok's valley in th' unequal strife.

Adieu! dear daughter of great Russia's land!
May brightest blessings, countless as the sand,
Show'r on thy country, bringing the increase
To her, and England too, of all the charms of Peace."

CHAPTER II.

Lord Salisbury as Herald Angel.

EIGHTEEN hundred and seventy-nine was a busy year for Madame Novikoff. It was the year when the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin were brought into operation. Russia was evacuating Bulgaria. British troops were fighting their way into the heart of Afghanistan. It was the last year of Lord Beaconsfield's Parliament. It was the year in which the Austro-German Alliance was proclaimed as "good tidings of great joy" by Lord Salisbury. It was also the year in which Madame Novikoff prepared for the press her book *Russia and England.* Altogether, from first to last, a busy, bustling, exciting year.

The year opened amid the gloom of war in Asia and rumours of war in Europe. Mr. Gladstone wrote me (February 8) :—

"Deeper and deeper grows the mystery how any one could be able to support or palliate proceedings like this Afghan war, in which folly and crime obstinately contend with each other for the palm."

The situation in the Balkan peninsula was not cheering. Austria, at a great cost of blood and treasure, had succeeded in crushing the armed resistance of the population of Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

The Turk was showing the utmost reluctance to

Photograph by the London Stereoscopic Co.]

THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.
Three times Prime Minister of Great Britain.

hand over to Montenegro the seaport conveyed to the principality by the Berlin Treaty. But Bulgaria, poor thrice-divided Bulgaria, was the chief trouble. A constitution had to be drawn up for Eastern Roumelia. There was great uneasiness and alarm. Mr. Gladstone wrote me (March 8): "The time has not yet come for despairing of the well-working of the Treaty in Eastern Roumelia." Mr. Gladstone was right. Where we were right to despair was in applying the article providing reforms for Macedonia and the other provinces.

Madame Novikoff hated the Berlin Treaty, and because Mr. Gladstone said that it must be enforced, she was for a time in a very mutinous state of mind. Still she did her best. She wrote me on February 26:—

"I am working very hard in the direction you know, always doing my best to prove the difference between the *two Englands*. But the bitterness of feelings is *extreme*, especially amongst the military classes. One of our bravest generals told me the other day at Princess Dolgourouky's party, 'How can you write and speak as you do about England? Can you really ever trust the good feelings in an Englishman?' My brother Alexander, however, is supporting me at St. Petersburg, and is my best ally.

"O. K."

Lord Dufferin was then British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. He was an old friend of Madame Novikoff, and they appear to have discussed the political situation in the East with considerable freedom. The following two letters from Madame Novikoff were written, the first on March 17, the second on March 27:—

I.

"Lord Dufferin has called upon me twice. I was delighted to see him and his nice wife, but his programme is anything but comforting. He really insists upon the Berlin Treaty, and therefore, said I, 'you hope to re-enslave altogether the wretched Roumelians.' 'No,' he said, 'we'll give them a constitution which will work better than that of Bulgaria.'

"*I:* 'You believe Turkish promises and reforms, though you know how completely you failed in introducing any change in Turkey itself.'

"*He:* 'Turkey itself is much larger than Roumelia, but in the Lebanon the administrative autonomy works exceedingly well.'

"*I:* 'What is the guarantee you offer that there will be a serious change for the benefit of the East Roumelians?'

"*He:* 'My word: and you may be certain that in England Conservatives as well as Liberals are equally anxious to prove that they are not opposed to freedom.'

"We talked much, but that was the gist of our discussion. Dufferin preferred talking of Lowell (whom he knows personally, and whose dear little book I was reading when he came in) than giving any determined positive facts. He wants a vague improvement. He 'disapproves of the Bulgarian Constitution, finding it not liberal enough.' 'In England,' said he, 'we care so much for Constitutional principles that we cannot be easily satisfied.'

"So you see, however charming he is, Dufferin seems determined to support the Berlin Treaty and offer words and promises instead of deeds. I remarked, 'I hope and trust you will not disappoint

everybody as did Lord Salisbury.' 'Oh,' answered he, smiling, 'but I am Lord Salisbury.'

"I saw Prince Gortschakoff, and praised Lord Dufferin warmly; but I did so before I had heard Dufferin's programme, and guided by your views upon him and his personal charm."

II.

"Starting off for Moscow this evening. Lord Dufferin paid me a long visit yesterday. He again chiefly insisted upon the carrying out of the Berlin Treaty by Russia, and when I said, 'What about the Slavs? Who will take care of them?' 'Oh,' he answered, 'England is not less anxious on their account than Russia.' When I put some questions, asking for a detailed positive answer, Dufferin could not be explicit. I urged him not to imitate Lord Augustus Loftus's[1] policy of antagonism, and to pay more attention to the unofficial Russia. He seemed to agree entirely, as far as that went. I vehemently blamed the tone of Lord Salisbury's dispatches, and warned him that if that system of brag be continued, there is no hope for any friendly terms between our two countries. I spoke . . . Well, you know the way in which I could speak. I am always frank and outspoken, whether people like it or not."

After these conversations with Lord Dufferin, and her failure to induce the English Liberals to take any action hostile to the Berlin Treaty, Madame Novikoff became much depressed. She wrote to me:—

"But if the Liberals are just as bad as their opponents

[1] The previous British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

(and such was already the conviction of our Press), what can we expect from any alliance with England ?

"I have seen Prince Gortschakoff several times. He thanked me for having spoken frankly and openly in favour of an Anglo-Russian Alliance, which he desires ; but I confess I think I have been foolish in tolerating any hope, or dream, of this kind."

Mr. Froude did nothing to revive her drooping confidence in her English allies. On March 30 she wrote me :—

" Received a kind and a long letter from Froude. He says : ' We have forgotten all about the East. It is a fashion to take up our political playthings one after the other, go into ecstasies about them, as if the whole business contained nothing which so passionately interested us, and in a few months the enthusiasm has gone off after some new ' will o' the wisp,' and the doll that so delighted us is a last year's toy. I don't believe that five hundred Jingoes could now be got together in Hyde Park if you were going to Constantinople. Your own few friends are just the same. Auberon Herbert has gone wild about some new philosophy. Everybody is to be allowed to do as he pleases, man and woman alike : we have but to vote that all laws and morals are tyranny, and that we will have no more of them ; and we shall be like Adam and Eve again before they knew good from evil ! ' "

Auberon Herbert's new philosophy was an heroic attempt on his part to carry out Herbert Spencer's anti-state principles to their logical ultimate. But a proposal to abolish all taxation and rely upon voluntary contributions for filling the Treasury did not commend itself to practical John Bull.

When I tried my hand at consolation, and assured her that the heart of the nation was sound, she would hear none of it. She wrote on April 14 :—

"As a rule, the English mind is very crotchety. Froude is in favour of the Zulu War; Freeman is quite wild about Froude, though in the Eastern Question they certainly had to go hand in hand; Gladstone sends his blessings to the Roumelians, and eulogises the Berlin Treaty; Dufferin sees no difference between the Lebanon and Roumelia; truthful Kinglake supports Layard; the cultivated, freethinking George Lewis sympathised with the Turks. . . . You are very consistent, but, as I said often enough, you are a great exception."

The Zulu War was absorbing the attention of England in the spring of 1879. Mr. Froude wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

"I care for nothing, except a little for those poor Zulus, some forty thousand of whom we are about to kill that we may make Christians of the rest. My serious opinion is that the number of the 'elect' was made up some years ago, and that the rest of us are just the refuse of the reprobate, who are left to tumble about upon the globe for a generation or two till our quarters down below are well warmed for us.

"Carlyle is not well. He grows weaker daily, and when told that if he goes out he will catch cold, and hurt himself, he says that is just what he wishes to do, that he may die and be well out of it.

"My *Cæsar* will be out in a few days. It is very heathenish. I think I shall *not* send you a copy. You will be shocked.

"But I am very much attached to you, and am, and always shall be, yours most truly,

"J. A. FROUDE."

Mr. Froude wrote some days later :—

"*April* 14.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I may say of your letters, as Coleridge the poet said when they gave him a bad cup of tea, 'It is better than I deserve.' But don't condemn us all as hopelessly lost. Our poor country plays strange pranks, for which it will have to pay one of these days. Perhaps the Bill is soon coming in. Meanwhile, though we can't help it, there are still a few among us who see how things are, and we laugh only to save ourselves from crying. Don't suspect *me* of being guilty of the Zulu war. I hate and abhor it. The little good which I was able to bring about in Africa has been all undone again. I have been protesting for the last two years, but they would not attend to me, and now this is the outcome. We shall have to kill many thousands of brave men. Alas, we shall kill almost as many women; for when native villages are stormed, the ladies and gentlemen look so much alike in the smoke and *absence of costume* that they cannot be distinguished. And we shall be disgraced before the whole civilised world.

"*Cæsar*—yes, I meant to give you a copy, and I will, if it turns out worth your acceptance; but Carlyle tells me that 'he can get no good of it,' that 'it is not clear,' 'not well done'—that, in short, it is a failure. He reduced me by his criticisms to the condition of a 'drenched Hen,' one of Voltaire's expressive images, and I almost believe he must be right. But other people begin to give a kinder

report of the book, some much kinder, and I hope that for once he is mistaken. He may not have found exactly what he wanted, and may have been out of humour in consequence. We shall soon know, and if the public verdict is more favourable, the book shall be sent to you. Carlyle grows weaker, and is sulky because he is obliged to go on living. He has lost his interest in everything which is taking place on earth, and is more and more absorbed in the thought of what is coming. He assures himself that Goethe believed in a future life, and he wonders why. Goethe, I imagine, looked at it like Rabelais —as a grand Perhaps. Cæsar said emphatically *No*. For which I praise his sincerity and superiority to cant. Your letters are very pleasant to me. Pray write again.—Yours most truly, J. A. FROUDE."

In an interesting letter dated June 23 Mr. Froude says:—

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—My nature is so perverse that when I receive a peremptory order to do anything, I immediately resist and rebel. For this reason, I believe, and only this, I have left your last letter for three weeks unanswered. I have had plenty of time, and could have written with much ease and pleasure to myself; but you laid your commands on me to write instantly, and in consequence I have let midsummer pass without taking my pen in hand. Then I had to write a long paper on this beautiful African business to help the *Ministers*!! I am on their side about the colonies, and you will think me a mere traitor—but I am not a traitor, but only a wilful being, who has his own opinions, and never alters them to please anybody.

"Carlyle is off to Scotland. His niece is to be

married in a fortnight, and they all are to keep house together—so it is at present arranged.

"Our country is plunged into affliction on the death of the Prince Imperial. We are uneasy at feeling that this catastrophe brings the world's eyes upon us, and we are conscious that as a military nation we are not adding to our glory just at present. After our loud talk two years ago, you in Russia must be watching our performances in Zululand with some amusement. Our entire available army has been sent out to reduce a country half the size of Ireland, occupied by naked savages, and we do not seem able to do it after all. I confess I am not sorry. I have long known that as a nation we shall fall lower and lower so long as the beautiful British Constitution continues, and the sooner that most blatant of impostures is exposed and blown to pieces the better it will be for us. If your Tsar is led away into establishing something of the same kind among you I shall sell out my Russian securities the next morning.

"You ask if I see Kinglake. No, I see nobody. I have led a hermit life this spring, dining out almost nowhere. I am enjoying the privilege of my advanced years, and pleading the necessity of going to bed and to sleep early as a reason for refusing invitations. I met Newton of the British Museum last night. He has just returned from Cyprus, and gives a sweet picture of that Paphian island. All parties seem agreed that the Turk must go his way, and even the Jingoes no longer believe that when the British Lion roars the Earth will quake at it. And the British Lion, I believe, is still to be found in the silent masses of English people, who do their work quietly and let politics alone. But the animal that bellows in Parliament and in the London Clubs is a very

different creature with long ears, clad in the skin of a lion who died centuries ago. If he would hold his tongue, he might be taken for what he pretends to be during a few more tens of years. But he insists on braying every morning through a thousand newspapers. Every smaller donkey sets up his note in harmony, so that now there is scarcely a spot left in the world where his true character is not discerned. —Faithfully yours, J. A. FROUDE."

There is a gap in her correspondence here for some months. When the letters begin again the clouds had begun to disappear. In August she went to Marienbad, and wrote to Mr. Gladstone she was going to Münich. He replied :—

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—By a singular coincidence I am to start for Münich (on the way to Venice) in a week. I hope to arrive there on the night of the 16th, and Dr. Döllinger will know where I am.—En attendant, yours sincerely, W. E. GLADSTONE.

"*September* 6, 1879."

By a not less singular coincidence she was destined that month to make the acquaintance of another notable Liberal. On September 15 she wrote me :—

"At Marienbad I had very pleasant chats with a Scotch M.P., Campbell-Bannerman. He is very intelligent and sound in his views. I showed him several copies of the *Northern Echo*. He seemed quite charmed with *Friends or Foes?* and recommended it strongly to his wife.

"I have to reach Münich this evening, and to-morrow hope to see Dr. Döllinger. Mr. Gladstone, by a happy chance, has to come to Münich to-morrow or the day after. On the 20th I start to pay a visit to

my mother, and remain with her at Florence till September 26. Do write."

The meeting with Dr. Döllinger and Mr. Gladstone was a very interesting one. They talked Old Catholicism, old China, and present-day politics. Mr. Gladstone nearly broke the heart of the curator of the museum by proving that his most treasured curio of China-ware was not genuine. Of the long conversations only one note remains :—

"Gladstone told me—when I saw him at Münich—that it was absurd to suppose Russia guilty of Cavagnari's death. 'Besides,' said he, 'it's ridiculous to ascribe such power to Russia, and to make England dependent upon the good or bad feelings of another country.'"

Mr. Froude's comments upon the Afghan disasters were characteristic. Writing September 10, 1879, he said :—

"By the time that you arrive you will find this Afghan business at red heat. How amused you Russians must be at seeing our dear Government strangled in the webs of its own spinning. Nobody cares about the country. One party triumphs in the mistakes of the other ; and the massacres at Cabul, and the Zulu war, and the destruction of the Harvest by the bad weather, are all so many trump cards in the hands of the Liberals. May the Devil fly away with Liberals and Tories both, and may Fate or Providence, or whatever it is, send poor England a Cæsar or a Cromwell to lift us out of the mud in which we are rolling.

"Carlyle is well, and as devoted as ever to his omnibus drives."

Poor Major Cavagnari had been slain at Cabul, one of the many victims of the Beaconsfield-Lytton policy in Afghanistan.

The death of Cavagnari and the misfortunes of the Afghan campaign brought about a recrudescence of ill-feeling between Russia and England. Even after the pleasant days at Münich Madame Novikoff relapsed into her despairing mood. In reply to my remonstrances she wrote :—

"You write sometimes as if I had given up all interest in the great questions which stand so much above us all, whilst in fact they are very dear to me —indeed, almost dearer than before. But, frankly speaking, sometimes I have moments of real disgust. Have you seen the *Times* leader endeavouring to prove 'how honestly England observed her neutrality in our last war with Turkey'? One is bewildered in reading such evident lies. Or does the *Times* only write for idiots? But enough. I am sure you feel all this as keenly as myself."

Münich was not the only place where Madame Novikoff was fortunate enough to meet Mr. Gladstone by chance on the Continent that autumn. M. de Girardin, the famous French editor and an old friend of Madame Novikoff, hearing of Mr. Gladstone's arrival in Paris from Italy, asked Madame Novikoff, who had arrived in Paris from Germany and to whom he was giving a dinner, if she would ask Mr., Mrs., and Miss Gladstone to come to the dinner, and, if so, what guests they would like to meet. Mr. Gladstone replied :—

"Hotel Bedford, *October* 17, 1879.

"Dear Madame N.,—I assure you, in all sincerity, that we are so well satisfied with the prospect of

seeing Mons. E. de Girardin that we could not desire to exercise any choice as to his guests were he ever so kindly disposed to give it. Your brother is the person I most wish to see, and also Monsieur François le Normand, but I am by no means sure whether he is in Paris. They could not tell me at the Bibliothêque. But I really could not presume to name a guest.

[Mr. G. called and said, "But I should like very much to avoid Gambetta."]

"Lord Dufferin's position seems odd. I am very sorry to miss M. Scherer.

"I wonder whether you, who know so many things, happen to know the address of Rev. M. Loyson (Père Hyacinth) or his church. I have been trying for a week and cannot get at him, but yet he is with a crowded congregation every Sunday—such cities, like London and Paris, are worlds of men.—Yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"I see that—like a barbarian as I am—I have not thanked you."

The dinner took place, and was a great success.

"Among those present," says Madame Novikoff, "were the Count de Lesseps, Edouard Scherer, my brother General Kiréeff, and M. Bardoux, the ex-Minister. Rather to our surprise, when dinner was over, M. Bardoux rose and addressed, in French, a long speech to his hosts and their English guests. This rather annoyed us all, for we were by no means sure whether Mr. Gladstone was really familiar with the French language. Imagine our surprise and pleasure when he rose and made a splendid speech, delivering it in French, and alluding gracefully to the great benefits

which had been conferred on civilisation by the joint action of France and England."

On October 26 she wrote :—

"I am quite *German*, and have little hope in any use of any French alliance ; but had a very interesting time in Paris."

From Paris she went to The Hague. Her dear Queen Sophie of Holland was dead.

On October 27 she wrote :—"Our Minister here and his wife (M. and Mme. Stolypin) give me a large dinner on Thursday next. They are greatly amused by English stupidity—making me out 'Prince Gortschakoff's agent.' 'Agent,' indeed! Can anything be more stupid ?"

Not until she reached London did she recover tone. She had not long to wait for a tonic. Soon after her arrival in London Lord Salisbury made his famous but indiscreet speech, hailing the Austro-German Alliance as good tidings of great joy.[1]

As usual, she wrote Mr. Gladstone first. He replied as follows :—

"*November* 10, 1879.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I am not sure of the purpose of your note of the 2nd ult. I can well understand your feelings about Salisbury's recent speech, but all I have to say either to him or the Liberals is well known and in print. Before this reaches you, you will have seen what Salisbury's

[1] "The newspapers say—I know not whether they say rightly—that a defensive alliance has been established between Germany and Austria. I will not pronounce any opinion as to the accuracy of that information, but I will only say this to you all who value the peace of Europe and the independence of nations—I may say without profanity that it is 'good tidings of great joy.'"

Lord and Master has to say. I should not wonder if he softened matters a little. The other committed a gratuitous worry and folly. Of course I must touch on the subject in Midlothian a fortnight hence. You know my line beforehand, and so does all the world. The position of the question has changed since Russia completed her great enterprise on behalf of Bulgaria, but justice and prudence are still what they were.

"I am afraid the name of General Kauffmann is not a talisman with me. I imagine him to be an able officer and Governor, but I do not look upon his proceedings as having been favourable to a good understanding between our countries at the time when all on our side were trying to promote it.

"I think, in a word, that (so far as I know) he has not worked as you have. I have often told you that, so far as I can form an opinion, your Government does not pay as much attention as it might advantageously give to making its case known through the Press in the great European capitals, Paris, London, Vienna. Take an article like Sir H. Rawlinson's in the *Nineteenth Century* for August. Who can deal with the details in that mischievous article except some one more or less inspired?

"My sister was much interested in your conversation; and she has also been much interested in Russia.—Believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

It was after receiving this letter that Madame Novikoff wrote what was perhaps the most widely read and noticed of all her letters, "Lord Salisbury as Herald Angel."

Vanity Fair published a long article which showed that she had at last succeeded in satisfying both the

ultra-Russians and the ultra-Turks, as the following extracts show :—

"Madame Novikoff has arrived in London to compensate us in some manner for the early departure of Count Schouvaloff, and perhaps also to replace him in some measure as the trusted adviser of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Derby. Whenever Madame Novikoff comes to London something interesting is always likely to happen, though it is not always that the public hear much of it. There is a scurrilous little Quaker print published in Darlington which is widely unknown under the name of the *Northern Echo*. It is very radical and very Russian. Mr. Gladstone has therefore naturally praised it, and not less naturally Madame Novikoff writes in it. It is an old device for the Russians to furnish brains for their English partisans, and Madame Novikoff, being a lady of great ability, furnishes in her writings brains which are singularly absent from the ordinary writings published in this little sheet. In its issue of Tuesday last she dwells upon the European situation and the new Austro-German Alliance with remarks which might have been taken from *Vanity Fair*, so exactly do they repeat what has been said on the subject in this journal. 'The establishment of the German Empire,' she says, 'has transformed the whole European situation. All this was changed, not when Prince Bismarck favoured Vienna with a call, but since the proclamation of the German Empire in 1871. Is it not known even at the English Foreign Office that Russia had some little part in that historic drama?' She proceeds to say: 'We have no desire to pick a quarrel with Germany, nor has Germany, I believe,

any intention of quarrelling with us,' and she declares the account published by the *Soleil* of Prince Gortschakoff's anger with Prince Bismarck to be a mere fabrication.

"Madame Novikoff deals also with the Austro-German alliance and ridicules, as we have from the first ridiculed, the idea that it can be really directed against Russia. 'The thrusting of Austria eastwards was,' she says, 'originally devised to weaken England,' and since Russia has taken so great a part in thrusting Austria eastwards, it follows that she cannot dread the result for herself. And Madame Novikoff further declares that 'Russia will not permit Austria to possess herself of the Balkan Peninsula.' She further says: 'It is a joke in Moscow that, the Sick Man at Constantinople being *in articulo mortis*, the attention of Europe will have to be turned to the Sick Woman of Vienna.' Here, again, is absolutely what we have all along contended—that Austria is being allowed to enlarge her boundaries only in order that at the given moment she may, with her boundaries old and new, be dismembered and divided as Poland was.

"It is to be hoped that this disclosure of Russian plans by a Russian in the columns of a pro-Russian organ will suffice to corroborate what we had already seen and declared."

Here is Kinglake's note: "I have been reading your paper in the *Northern Echo*, and with great interest and pleasure. Indeed, to me, it is by far the most interesting of any that you have written, and the thoughts are charmingly interspersed with witty sentences. You give your Tsar two good ringing slaps in the face, and it is with unmixed pleasure

that I hear the sound of the smacks. You put the two Miss Austrias in the corner, and forbid them to think they exist. In dealing with Lord Salisbury, you preserve your sweet, ladylike, radiant expression of countenance, but (as English schoolmistresses phrase it) you 'give him the rod without mercy, and then, poor boy, make him stand in a fool's cap!'"

Thomas Carlyle sent her word: "I read at once your last letter. It is very good, very."

Mr. Froude, writing several months later, said:—

"It is perfectly true that a scheme was on foot for Austria to seize Bulgaria, and eventually Constantinople. That was the 'good tidings of great joy.'"

Writing to Madame Novikoff just before the polls opened in 1880, Mr. Froude said:—

"Seriously, I think it now not impossible that Lord Beaconsfield will be beaten, but the cards are in his hands meanwhile. And it is probable, or at least possible, that if he sees the elections going against him he may try some bold *coup d'état*. A friend of Layard, who has just come from Constantinople, whispered to me a night or two ago that the Turkish Government is close upon its fall, that Dizzy knows it, and that *at this moment close and important communications are going on with Austria*. I laughed, and said, 'I suppose you are going to put Austria into possession of Constantinople?' 'You might have guessed worse,' my friend answered. Take this for what it is worth. A bit of thistle down which shows the drift of the wind. The Tories would do it if they could and dared."

But the most interesting letters she received were those from Canon Liddon.

In her article Madame Novikoff had referred to Lord Salisbury's reputation for veracity, a reputation obscured chiefly by his disingenuous reply when questioned in the House of Lords concerning the Schouvaloff agreement.

Sending the article to Canon Liddon, she asked him, as an old friend of Lord Salisbury, what he thought of it. Canon Liddon replied in two long letters, which are valuable tributes to the memory of Lord Salisbury. Canon Liddon began by deploring

". . . the irrational and mischievous jealousy of Russia which the present Government and a large section of the English people do unfortunately entertain. Lord Salisbury uses the official language, coloured and heightened by characteristics of his own, and it is to me a matter of sorrow that he should be associated with a political chief who obliges or induces him to use it; but here I stop, because I distinguish between the hard necessities of the Minister and the character of the man. I have known Lord Salisbury more or less for many, I think nearly thirty, years; and I am intimately persuaded that he would be incapable of knowingly saying or doing anything at variance with truth. He would rather cut off his right hand. If in his public language and action there are points which puzzle me sorely, I fall back on a robust conviction as to the character of the man based on personal knowledge of long standing, and I feel that some day an explanation will be surely forthcoming. For this reason, I cannot follow you in some of the language of the article; but then, I do not forget that, writing without my personal knowledge of Lord

REV. CANON LIDDON, D.D.

Salisbury and in view of the *primâ facie* estimate of certain public events and utterances, you could not make the reserves and allowances which would be natural to or rather obligatory on me. My old affection and reverence for Lord Salisbury have made me often wish that he had not joined Lord Beaconsfield's Government, but his decision to do this has carried with it consequences from which he cannot disentangle himself and which I cannot but deplore, and yet these are not of a character to make one forget what I know of him, or how surely what is perplexing in his attitude is entitled, at least at my hands, to a generous and forbearing construction.

" Thrown as I have been very largely, all my life, with Conservatives, I cannot forget the unjust and cruel constructions which *they* put upon Mr. Gladstone's acts and language while he was Prime Minister, or how deeply, knowing—at least in some cases—what were the real facts, I resented it; and yet I could not follow Mr. Gladstone and all his legislation, *e.g.*, about the Universities, a matter touching the gravest interests and which came very near home to me!

" You see, dear Madame Novikoff, I have taken you quite at your word, and have told you exactly what I think. To justify my opinion of Lord Salisbury at length would be hardly possible within the limits of a letter, or without violating confidences. But pray do not be too much influenced by his official proceedings: they represent his chief rather than himself. You will say that he might break away from the Cabinet, but you know enough of political life to know that it has its invisible fetters, and that amid the turmoil of political conflict the heroic is possible only for a few.

"I cannot help thinking that Lord Salisbury, while using language and acting at Berlin after a fashion which I do *not* defend, did yet as a matter of fact save us English at a critical moment last year from the crime and shame of a war with Russia, into which Lord Beaconsfield would have been willing to plunge the country. He did this at a heavy cost, and I, who wish that we had joined Russia in coercing Turkey in 1876, do not say that it is the best thing he could have done for England. But it was better far than a very possible alternative.

"Hoping to see you when I return to town, and begging you to make my very kind regards to Gen. Kiréeff, I am, my dear Madame Novikoff, yours very truly, H. P. LIDDON."

Next day the conscientious Canon returned to the charge:—

"You asked me, you will remember, to tell you 'frankly' what I thought about your allusions to Lord Salisbury; and I thought it due to your past kindness to myself, to my respect for you, and to our common sympathies that I should do so. No doubt I expressed myself awkwardly. But I meant to say that you would have judged Lord Salisbury differently if you had known him personally, and for a long term of years. For you would have known that he is quite incapable of knowingly saying what is untrue or doing what is dishonourable. All the world knows that in 1867 he left the Government rather than acquiesce in what he deemed wrong; and he is indeed governed by a higher motive than what is vaguely called 'honour'—namely, a desire to do what is right so far as he knows it.

"All this is quite compatible with his making

great mistakes, and on subjects of the gravest importance. And, as I cannot but think, he has made such a mistake in relation to the Eastern Question. But political error is one thing, and want of moral principle is another. If Lord Salisbury has been controlled by the subtle genius and imperious will of Lord Beaconsfield, I deplore the thraldom in which he is held, but I do not therefore think him a bad man. We must be, before all things, just. Mr. Gladstone used the sternest language about Lord Palmerston, and afterwards accepted office under him. Lord Palmerston was, as I believe, one of the worst men who ever governed this country, but I have not therefore learned to love and respect Mr. Gladstone the less. In judging of public men, and of their public acts, it is necessary to remember that much which influences them can never be known to their contemporaries . . . therefore the opinion which we form of them must be largely influenced by what we know independently of their characters. I knew Lord Salisbury well enough to be sure that if you knew him too you would not alter your opinion of the merits of the Eastern Question, but you would appreciate his relation to it somewhat differently.

"Dear Mme Novikoff, may I add that I read with regret your opinion that Russia ought to have gone to war about the Berlin Treaty? It never occurred to me that Russia yielded to menace. The Jingo party in England said this in order to enhance the importance of Lord Beaconsfield's rôle at Berlin, and also to construct a retreat from a ludicrous position which they had themselves occupied. But to me Russian statesmen seemed to act as good men would act who are strong in the consciousness of a strong cause, and who are too serious lightly to

provoke the demon of war. They may well have felt that the Berlin Treaty *did* secure the most valuable results of their previous self-sacrifices, and that, for the rest, they had only to bide their time. Had their object been the aggrandisement of Russia or the union of the Slav races, they may have made a mistake; but in this case they would not have had the sympathies of people like myself. National or race selfishness, miscalled patriotism, seems to me as little to be admired in one nation as in another. As the noble liberators of the oppressed Christians, they did the best they could under the circumstances; they would not have helped the Christian cause beyond the Balkans or in Asia by making war with two or more of the European Powers.

"Pray forgive an explicitness which nothing but a confidence that your kindness will not misunderstand could justify.—I am, dear Mme Novikoff, yours very truly, H. P. LIDDON."

Mr. Froude was always the spirit that denies, so far as the Liberals were concerned. His pessimism and unbelief appealed to Madame Novikoff in her sombre moods. She wrote me, November 22 :—

"The last time I saw Froude, he said, 'I believe that the Liberal party, if they had been in office, would have acted much as Lord Beaconsfield did, and I have considered it most fortunate for Europe that the Conservatives were in office when the trial came. One of the two great parties which divide England has now committed itself to a conciliation policy and must, I think, adhere to it in future. I do not credit Gladstone,' added Froude, 'with any real regard for Russia. The safest plan is to go her own

way wisely and prudently, but also firmly, relying on her own strength and the justice of her cause.'

"I think he is right after all."

About this time Madame Novikoff sent Mr. Froude a copy of the *Nouvelle Revue*. He wrote :—

"In case I do not find you at home, thanks for the *Revue*. It says precisely what I have been saying for the last quarter of a century. But I have learnt this, that if you can find out on any given occasion which is the simple, prudent, and just course to take, you may be sure that such a course will *not* be taken by English politicians."

It must be admitted that Mr. Gladstone gave Froude cause for his scepticism. His reference to Russia as "an inappropriate instrument" for freeing Bulgaria called forth from Madame Novikoff an indignant outburst in vindication of the foreign policy of Russia which is noticed at some length in another chapter. Mr. Gladstone replied, November 27 :—

"Dear Madame N.,—I thank you very much for sending the letter, and have only to make this correction: my Resolutions were never abandoned. It is a matter of parliamentary form not easily explained to those outside. Of course I abide by my article. You are quite within your right in free animadversion.

"Overwhelmed with work."

Mr. Gladstone was absolutely incapable of sacrificing a point to be scored off his political opponents at home in order to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of his friends abroad. In one of his Midlothian speeches he denounced Russia for her conduct in sending the Stolietoff mission to Cabul. Madame

Novikoff, naturally aghast to find Mr. Gladstone condemning what Lord Beaconsfield had condoned, wrote to ask him if he had been correctly reported. His reply hardly exhibits Mr. Gladstone at his best:—

"HAWARDEN, *December* 10, 1879.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I must answer your query hastily, for I am at present pressed beyond measure. What I said (as far as my memory serves) was that Russia, in sending her Embassy, behaved most unjustifiably *as regarded the Ameer*. Possibly the reporters, who have done their work admirably in general, did not observe this distinction.

"As regarded us, I think that the Embassy was, under the circumstances, a natural and warrantable measure; more so, perhaps, than some of the previous letters of General Kauffmann, on which our Viceroys certainly placed the best construction. You like plain speaking, and I hope you will always use it in regard to us. For me, you cannot speak too plainly. I will do the same; and will say that I think my expression was a mild and measured one. Never, I think, probably, was a poor feeble ruler so ill-used by two great Powers, acting in antagonism to one another, as the unfortunate Ameer was used by England and Russia. After what you have done, you ought in honour, I think, to have supported him against us. In fact, I should say you had used him as ill as possible were it not that we had used him worse, and even a great deal worse. I would to God the dissolution came at once, that we might know where we stand.

"The Sheffield election is important. I expect that we shall win it, but this is only an opinion.

"In haste.—Sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

It was in the latter end of 1879 Madame Novikoff made the acquaintance of the Rev. Rudolph Suffield, who had left the Roman priesthood after the proclamation of the dogma of infallibility. He was an enthusiastic Russophile, and Mr. Gladstone found in him a devoted disciple. Mr. Suffield was much impressed by the high regard Mr. Gladstone expressed to him of Madame Novikoff, whose statements, he said, Mr. Gladstone often quoted with implicit confidence. Mr. Suffield told Madame Novikoff on one occasion that Mr. Gladstone regretted the Russians had not occupied Constantinople in 1878, and so settled the Eastern Question once for all. If Mr. Gladstone held this pious opinion—which is not improbable, for his more ardent followers were simply sick with angry disappointment when the war closed leaving the Sultan still lord of the city of Constantine and St. Sophia still in the hands of the Infidel—he never breathed it to any less sympathetic ear than that of Mr. Suffield.

Madame Novikoff was busy preparing *Russia and England* for the press. Mr. Froude had undertaken to write the Preface. He wrote her on November 21 :—

" It must be some comfort to you that your coming to England has enabled you to be of no common use both to your own country and to this. A feather would have turned the scale in favour of war last year, and your efforts were more a great deal than a feather weight."

In December she wrote to remind him of his promise to write the Preface. He replied :—

" *December* 11, 1879.

" My dear Madame Novikoff,—You distract me. I am as busy as I can be. I cannot do your Preface, or think of it, till these Scotch Lectures are

finished. I had no idea that you were in a hurry. Besides, I must see all your letters and consider them before I can write anything fit to appear in such brilliant company. The Master of the Ceremonies who introduces the great lady to the ballroom must have his laced coat on.—Yours in greatest haste,

"J. A. F."

The following are extracts from his letters in December :—

18*th*.—"I was tempted away yesterday ; indeed, I was made *oblivious* of my engagements by the *ice*. I like ice, it is so smooth and cold ; and when I get upon it on skates, I can dream that I am once more young. When I ought to have been at Albemarle Street last night, I was gliding about in the dark alone on a pond in a private garden in the Regent's Park—perfectly happy. Last night I received from America a sackful of reviews of *Cæsar*. There, it seems, I have found a congenial public. The book has curiously interested them. Is it a compliment ? I had drawn Cæsar, attending chiefly to the human features of him, and not particularly careful whether I tied his garters correctly as scholars insist they should be tied. The Americans do not seem to think this of so much importance as the *Saturday Review* and *Spectator*. I am pleased on the whole."

30*th*.—"I have no opinion as to whether the elections will bring a change. If I were a Republican, I should wish for another six years' rule of the Victoria, Beaconsfield, and Salisbury Trinity. At the end of it we should be ripe for the Culbute Générale.

"Adieu. Why should I forget you ? I never forget anybody."

As a rule, in London Madame Novikoff dwelt

among her own people, her salon being frequented chiefly by those who shared her views upon political and religious questions, although of course there were exceptions. But she occasionally made excursions *in partes infidelium*. In December 1879 she went to Cambridge on a visit to Sir Henry Maine. She wrote me on her return :—

" *December* 2, 1879.

" You may well imagine what an interesting time I passed at Cambridge. Lady Maine is a dear creature, Sir Henry extremely intelligent and moderate in his views. They had some people to meet me, amongst the others Gladstone's daughter, Miss Helen G., a student at one of the Ladies' Colleges, and Mr. Oscar Browning (' quite a Russian,' as he says). But here is a terrible man called General Strachey, Lord Lytton's *Alter-Ego*. I never saw such a specimen yet ! He declared that it is a pure invention that Lytton received orders to find a pretext for fighting Shere Ali, and that Salisbury ' was certainly a very able and trustworthy minister,' etc. etc. O. K."

" A terrible man " indeed, this General Strachey, a valuable unique " specimen," added there and then to Madame Novikoff's collection of human curios.

CHAPTER III.

"Russia and England."

THE General Election of 1880 was close at hand, when Lord Beaconsfield's policy as a whole was to be submitted to the nation for judgment. Mr. Gladstone had opened the campaign by his memorable "Pilgrimage of Passion" in Midlothian. At least one-half of his comprehensive indictment was directed against the anti-Russian policy of the Ministry. It was evident that the election would largely turn upon the Eastern and Afghan questions. Mr. Gladstone had staked the fortunes of his party upon his unsparing condemnation of the Jingo policy of Lord Beaconsfield. It was thought by many who were interested in the fortunes of both countries that no better service could be rendered to the cause of the Anglo-Russian entente than to republish before the election a collection of the articles and letters which Madame Novikoff had written since the autumn of 1877. Some of them had appeared in *Is Russia Wrong?* others in *Friends or Foes?* while some had only appeared in the columns of the *Northern Echo.* Merely as a Campaign document such a collection would be invaluable to the Liberals. But it was much more than a Campaign document. *Russia and England,* as the collection was named, was a serious and eloquent plea addressed to the British nation on a great historic occasion in favour of an entente with Russia.

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF (1880).

In 1880 we stood at the turning of the ways. If the electorate had condoned the fraud of Peace with Honour, the crime of the Afghan invasion and the anti-Russian policy of Lord Beaconsfield, the one great chance which Mr. Gladstone and the Atrocity Agitation had offered us of making a new departure would be thrown away. There was no other Russian but Madame Novikoff either willing or capable of making such an appeal.

Madame Novikoff's concluding words in the closing pages of *Russia and England* express the spirit in which she approached the task :—

"The issue now lies, not in the hands of the Cabinet, but in those of the peoples.

"To bring about an entente cordiale between England and Russia is indispensable for the civilisation of the Orient, and is the only good standpoint from which can be approached the great problems of Europe and Asia.

"Why can we not be friends ?

"This inflamed animosity, so sedulously fostered by interested parties, is a reproach to our intelligence and our sense of duty.

"We have nothing to gain, and very much to lose, by substituting hatred for cordiality, and suspicion for confidence. Nor is it we alone who suffer : every human being between the outposts of the two Empires is more or less affected by the relations existing between England and Russia.

"The Russian people have been reluctantly driven into an attitude of antagonism to England. Gladly would we hail any prospect of escape from that involuntary position, and heartily would we welcome your co-operation in that task of developing the

liberties of the Christian East, which is now proclaimed as the policy of Liberal England, but which has always been the historical mission of my country."

The contents of the collection were somewhat miscellaneous, tempting Kinglake to remark drily: "Your book, Miss, is exactly like the Bible. Nobody knows why these chapters are put together, and still people will have to worship them."

There was, however, no difficulty in divining why they were put together. However heterogeneous they might appear to be in form, in substance, and in spirit, they were one and all directed to one definite end—to remove misunderstandings between Russia and England, to interpret Russian ideals to the British public, and to combat the mischievous delusions which formed the stock-in-trade of the anti-Russians.

The only criticism which was levelled against the way in which Madame Novikoff performed her task was that she had been too unsparing in her onslaught upon the Beaconsfieldian policy, and that she might have gained a more favourable hearing if she had put a little less vinegar into her salad. Mr. Arnold Forster, then a young man of promise, who was quite certain at the end of 1879 that there would be war between England and Russia, was one of those who resented the freedom of the Novikoff polemic. On the other hand, Mr. Gladstone warmly encouraged her to lay on and spare not. Replying to the complaints of the more sensitive of her opponents, Madame Novikoff wrote :—

"I may be told, perhaps, that by expressing too frankly and unreservedly the feelings of Russians on England's policy, I injure more than I serve the cause

I have at heart. But this would be an indirect accusation of England, against which I protest.

"To understand why we are displeased with each other is the first indispensable step for removing a misunderstanding. Had I minced my words too much, had I shrunk from stating facts with the utmost frankness, I should not have been the faithful and true exponent of Russian views."

Madame Novikoff did not say what may also be said in her justification, viz. that the issue between the two parties was then so sharply drawn, and the animosity aroused by the ministerial policy so intense, that it was impossible for her to say anything in censure of ministerial policy that would have been too severe for the Opposition. Carlyle and Froude called on Madame Novikoff one day, together, as they often did.

Carlyle insisted upon the publication of her letters.

In reply she asked, "Will you write the Preface?"

He looked mournfully at his trembling hands, and said, "No, I cannot; but here is a young man, Froude, he will do it."

And Froude did it, and thus *Russia and England* appeared introduced by the Preface as Carlyle had suggested.

When Madame Novikoff asked Mr. Froude to write the Preface to *Russia and England*, he readily consented.

Later he wrote to her about the matter:—

"*January* 20, 1880.

"I have all the sheets, and will set about the Preface to-morrow. I am *astonished* at the excellence of your workmanship. How have you ever found time to read so many books and to read them so well?

"As you mention your brothers, I may of course speak of you as yourself. I must still keep my personal commendation within my real opinion, but I think neither Hayward nor Kinglake will this time have occasion to find fault.

"Thanks for the *Nouvelle Revue*. You write French as excellently as you write English. The only foreigner I ever knew who could use our language as well as you do was also a Russian and was a very dear friend of mine. He first taught me to know your country and to value it. He went mad. He was taken back to Odessa. He recovered his senses for a few hours before he died. He asked after his English friend. The answer was the booming of the English guns which were then bombarding the outer harbour. This was in 1854."

The following day Mr. Froude wrote to suggest that the task had better be entrusted to Mr. Kinglake :—

"*It will be far better for your interests* if Kinglake will himself write the Preface. First, he knows the Eastern Question far better than I do ; and then a second reason, and that is, *his* name will go farther a great deal than a repetition of mine. He is anxious, you tell me, about what I shall say. For your sake, then, let him take it on himself. I will send you or bring you my own poor contribution the day after to-morrow. Let him look at it and alter it or destroy it and do another and a better instead. I have no vanity to be wounded, and desire nothing but what will be best for you. J. A. F."

Madame Novikoff would not hear of the suggestion. So at last the Preface was written by Mr. Froude and much approved by all her friends.

His Preface, a well-weighed appeal for friendship

with Russia, was accompanied by a warmly appreciative tribute to Madame Novikoff :—

"Under the influence of the same passionate patriotism which sent her brother to his death, the sister has laboured year after year in England, believing that, however misled, we are a generous people at heart, and that, if we really knew the objects at which Russia was aiming, we should cease to suspect or thwart them. Her self-imposed task has been so hard that only enthusiasm could have carried her through it. We in our present humour, believing that the world is governed wholly by selfish interests, have forgotten that there were times in our own history, and those the times best worth remembering, when interest was nothing to us, and some cause which we considered holy was everything."

After saying that the Kiréeffs belonged to the exceptional race of mortals who form the forlorn hopes of mankind, whose memories are consecrated by history, Mr. Froude thus explained why the book was written :—

"The object of this book is to exhibit our own conduct to us during the past four years as it appears to Russian eyes. If we disclaim the portrait we shall gain something by looking at it, and some few of us may be led to reflect that if Russia is mistaken in her judgment of England, we may be ourselves as much mistaken in our judgment of Russia. As to execution and workmanship, no foreigner who has attempted to write in the English language has ever, to my knowledge, shown more effective command of it. O. K. plays with our most complicated idioms, and turns and twists and points her sarcasms with a skill which many an accomplished English authoress

might despair of imitating. She seems to have read every book that has been written, and every notable speech which has been uttered, on the Eastern Question, for the last half-century. Far from bearing us ill-will, she desires nothing so much as a hearty alliance between her country and ours. She protests justly against the eagerness with which every wild story to Russia's disadvantage obtains credit among us, and against the wilful embittering of relations which ought to be friendly and cordial."

If Froude was glad, as he said, to be able "to assist, in however slight a degree, the courageous lady who was pleading the cause of the Slavs before the English public," she had many other friends who were not less glad to commend her book to the public. Mr. Gladstone in the *Nineteenth Century*, M. de Laveleye in the *Fortnightly* and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Mr. Kinglake in the *Quarterly Review*, and M. Cariolis, an eminent French diplomatist, in the *Nouvelle Revue*, like noble heralds blew a resounding fanfare to proclaim to the world the importance of her book. Nor were there lacking many and friendly reviewers of reputation albeit they had not attained to the rank of the first-named.

Mr. Carlyle would have written if he could, but as he lamented to me, he could not dictate, and in those last days whenever he tried to hold a pen and trace some words his fingers would relax and the pen would go wildly scrambling over the paper. Mr. Gladstone not only reviewed the book, he referred to it in his speeches at Midlothian. The Rev. Malcolm MacColl was not less enthusiastic than his chief:—

"Two things strike me as characteristic of your work: your bright, crisp, and terse style, and your

skilful presentation of facts and arguments. I am sure the book will be most useful."

The hostile reviewers were few. The *Pall Mall Gazette* contented itself with the sardonic remark: "Mr. Gladstone praises Madame Novikoff for her remarkable ability in handling political controversy. Some of us think it would be more correct to do homage to her remarkable ability in handling political men."

After the Midlothian speeches, there was no book published on the eve of the election that went so direct to the heart of the great issue before the country as *Russia and England*.[1]

[1] *Russia and England* was published by Messrs. Longman in January 1880, with a portrait of Nicholas Kiréeff, to whose memory the work is dedicated. The following list of its chapters will suffice to give some idea as to the wide range of its contents :—

PART I. *The Russian People and the War*—

1. Introductory. 2. The Two Russias—Moscow and St. Petersburg. 3. Secret Societies and the War—Aksakoff's speech on the Servian War. 4. Cross and Crescent. 5. Before the fall of Plevna—Aksakoff's address on Russian disasters. 6. The Bulgarians and their liberators. 7. After Plevna. 8. English neutrality. 9. On the eve of the Congress. 10. After the Congress—M. Aksakoff's speech on Russian Concessions. 11. Divided Bulgaria.

PART II. *The Future of the Eastern Question*—

1. Lord Salisbury as Herald Angel. 2. The Anglo-Turkish Convention. 3. The Heirs of the Sick Man. 4. The last word of the Eastern Question.

PART III. *Misunderstandings and Prejudices*—

1. Some English prejudices. 2. Poland and Circassia. 3. Siberia. 4. Russian autocracy. 5. Constitutionalism in Russia. 6. The Attempt on the Emperor.

PART IV. *The Anglo-Russian Alliance*—

1. Friends or Foes. 2. England's traditional policy. 3. Russian and English parties. 4. Russia's foreign policy—a reply to Mr. Gladstone. 5. Russian aggression. 6. Russia and the Afghan War. 7. Russians in Central Asia. 8. Traditional policy of Russia. 9. Some last words.

MAPS. Bulgaria (Ethnological and Political)—showing the Three Bulgarias, Constantinople, San Stefano, and Berlin.

Among the letters Madame Novikoff received on the publication of her book I find one from my brother Herbert, then a divinity student at Glasgow University, who, in asking her to accept a copy of *Ecce Homo*, said that he did so because

"I regard you as one especially inspired by the 'Enthusiasm of Humanity' spoken of in this book. The sacrifices made by you and by your noble house on behalf of our poor brothers in the East are to me some of the brightest evidences of the living presence and power of the Divine Man of Nazareth. There are therefore few books which I would more like to send you than *Ecce Homo*.

"You will forgive me venturing to express my assurance that the efforts of which *Russia and England* is at once the record and the consummation,—efforts made to reconcile two Great Powers in their common task of civilising and Christianising the world,—will bring upon you the rich blessing of Him who promised to the peace-makers His Own lofty relation to the Father of all."

When Mr. Freeman read the chapter on "The Two Russias," he wrote :—

(*February* 20, 1880.) "I have long said that it would be a great thing to pull down London, Paris, Berlin, and New York, for the general good of mankind and for the special good of the four nations more immediately concerned. Shall I add St. Petersburg to the list ? I was rebuilding of it the other day with Tsar Peter in my *Geographical History*."

At the beginning of the New Year Madame Novikoff sent Mr. Gladstone some interesting letters from

Dr. Paul Turner, a Slav of Bohemia, and Bishop Strossmayer. Mr. Gladstone replied as follows :—

"HAWARDEN, *January* 6, 1880.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I fear my only apology for the way in which I use you as a correspondent is that I use others still worse. My letters are in truth beyond human power to grapple with, or at least with such human powers as I possess.

"I return Dr. Turner and Bishop Strossmayer. His sentiments about Russia and England are noble.

"As to Turkey, I do not consider our position is exceptional. But in Asia, and as to Central Asia, there is no doubt that we ought to be in cordial understanding. I am not sure whether there is any medium between that and a total misunderstanding. My only fear, if you reply to me, is your being too civil. Any courteous words you may employ will be interpreted by Jingoism —which still exists, though at a discount—as evidence of a Satanic plot. I shall be glad, therefore, if you will be as dry, hard (nay, if rude so much the better!) as you can find it in your nature to be.

"My coming to town remains quite uncertain at present. If I come I hope to call. Without reference to particulars, of which I am of course ignorant, I am glad you are writing, for I think frank and bold expressions of Russian opinions are useful here as being conformable to the genius of this country.—Believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

When *Russia and England* was passing through the press Madame Novikoff wrote to Mr. Gladstone announcing its early publication and asking if he would accept a copy. He replied :—

"*January* 24, 1880.

"Your kind note finds me passing through London very hurriedly on my way between my sister's death-bed and her funeral. I set out to-morrow between nine and ten. I accept with many thanks the offer of your book. From experience I feel assured that it will be courteous and frank, as well as able, and that being such it will be good.—Sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

When Mr. Gladstone received the book he wrote :—

"*February* 1880.

"Many thanks. You will hear of my name in connection with the volume at the close of the month. You could not have written with more talent and adroitness had you been practising it from your cradle upwards."

Then, referring to her explanation of the mistake in misinterpreting "Nous sommes dedans," which nearly caused a crisis in 1878, he continued :—

"As a Russian you are pretty sure to be right in a matter of tongue, and Littré comes near you but not quite up to you. He says: 'Fig. et familièrement : donner dedans se laisser sottement tromper. Familièrement mettre quelqu'un dedans, l'impressioner et fig. le tromper.' You will justly laugh at my setting up for a Frenchman. *Bon voyage.* —Sincerely yours, W. E. G.

"I must congratulate you on your faculty of writing. But I renew my complaint of too great civility."

Next day Mr. Gladstone wrote :—

"*February* 16, 1880.

"A thousand thanks for the book. It is clear, strong, outspoken, drastic. Much too civil (as far as I have read) to me.

"I am reading on, and shall meditate.—Always yours, W. E. G."

Six days later she received this letter :—

"HAWARDEN, *February* 22, 1880.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I have been so busy with you in another shape, amidst the needful preparations for moving to London, that I have little time for doing more than explaining that my labour has been on a paper for the *Nineteenth Century* of March, with your work for its subject. I think it for the public good that attention should be drawn to it, and my impression is that it is yet too early for you to conclude that it will not be noticed. There has been hardly time. Still I have little doubt that the line of the 'Jingo' papers will be to treat it with contempt.

"I return, however, to my point. I am disappointed at your careful courtesy to me, and hope you will put into the second edition something that may sting!

"It is not possible to express the grief and horror with which I regard the crime at St. Petersburg.[1] And the stupidity too of this murderous brutality, if it be true that after all they have very little damaged the dining-room.

"I recommend to your notice a small work, *Il Nihilismo,* published at Turin in 1879. If possible I will send to 16 Rue Dupont by Wednesday's post

[1] The explosion at the Winter Palace, which occurred February 17, whereby 10 soldiers were killed and 48 injured.

from London a proof of my article. It will be a very rough one. I hope to arrive in London to-morrow.

"Thanks for your enclosure, and thanks to you for having done, I think, a service to peace and justice by your able work.—With all good wishes for your journey, I remain sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

As Madame Novikoff lingered in London, two days later he sent her there the proof of his article with the accompanying letter :—

"*February* 24, 1880.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I send this proof for your perusal without delay, so that if you see any gross blunder you may have the opportunity of protesting. But remember it has to be corrected and toned, and much of the MS., I ought to say, went to the printer without having been read over. Always remember you have been too civil to yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Gladstone's article in the March number of the *Nineteenth Century* of 1880 was the most remarkable public tribute ever paid by an English statesman to a foreign critic of English policy.

Mr. Gladstone began his article thus :—

"This volume is the work of a lady manifestly possessed of a great talent either for politics or at any rate for the effective handling of political controversy. It is the work of an advocate and a partisan. And this fact it is which gives it, for all sober-minded Englishmen, a marked value. What may be the relations between O. K. and her own Government we on this side need neither know nor care. She canvasses its proceedings freely, and her advocacy and partisanship appear to be enlisted not for her

Government but for her country. She has this title to the particular respect of English Tories, that she glows with a fervent patriotism. The name of O. K. is well known; but the transparent veil with which she has thought fit not to hide but to shade her features is not to be removed by the rash hands of a reviewer. For a considerable time she has been wont, amidst our hottest controversies on the Eastern Question, to state boldly the case of her country in the columns of a provincial journal which is called the *Northern Echo*, is published at Darlington, and has fought the battle of the subject races in the Ottoman Empire for the last four years with the keen intelligence of their neighbours in Yorkshire and the unhesitating courage of Britain. She has at least a lover's quarrel with us, and in conducting it she exercises the privilege of plain speaking. Were she reserved, diplomatic, and (to use a homely phrase) mealy-mouthed on this point, her work would be a pointless dart. The stringency and severity of her critical remarks give the book its principal interest and value. It must be read by Englishmen, on a multitude of points, with needful and salutary pains. Nor is the work, when viewed apart from its political and moral aims, by any means without literary value. It is eminently readable; clear and fresh in style, full of point and ease. The English of O. K. is better than the English of a majority of native writers; and the rare and widely separated instances in which a foreign hand may be surmised have this recommendation, that they testify to the spontaneity of the work, and suggest that it has not been trimmed out of any of its life and spirit by the mechanical operations of an Anglican schoolmaster. It presents another touching claim to the regard of every feeling man:

it is dedicated to the memory of an heroic brother, Colonel Nicolai Kiréeff, who wooed and won a hero's death at the outset of the Servian War of 1876, and whose blood, through the electric effect produced upon the Russian mind, seems to have been the seed of Slavonic liberty, as the blood of martyrs is said to be the seed of the Church.

"O. K. reminds us that the knout has, since 1863, been forbidden in Russia; but the literary knout is an instrument which she seems to apply in controversy with tolerable efficacy to the shoulders of her opponents. She does not scruple to allege plainly the indignation of her countrymen. She thinks that they desire English friendship, but, after the repeated rebuffs they have suffered, that the next overtures must come from us. And she certainly does not seek to purchase our goodwill by an unworthy or too modest reticence."

Mr. Gladstone then proceeded to describe the contents of the book, for most of which he expressed his admiration. He substantially endorsed all the conclusions of Madame Novikoff excepting those relating to Constitutionalism in Russia. Upon the more important theses maintained he was in entire accord with her. He declared:—

"The first vital point which O. K. has irrefragably established was the series of concessions by which (and no wonder) the Russian Government struggled to avoid the alternative of war with Turkey. She endeavoured in every way to maintain the European Concert, and to adapt herself to the views of England. . . .

"Anything short of Zero the Russian Government

was prepared to accept; but the cipher pure and simple it would not. The utter defeat of Europe, total inaction after the Bulgarian Massacres, or, worse than total inaction, a renewal of hollow and unmeaning diplomatical appeals, to be met by promises stamped with falsehood from their birth. Such was the only alternative offered; and so Russia went into the war alone. There was many a murmur, many a scowl, and many a shrug, but there was not one approving voice from a nation or a Government or a party. Solitary voices there may have been, but they were without an echo. The motives which impelled Russia to the war were like the motives which brought England to the Conference at Constantinople—various, if not conflicting; the people of Russia were impelled by an uncalculating enthusiasm, and official Russia gave a reluctant assent. English Tories would only lay up a more and more cruel future for themselves the longer they closed their eyes to the fact that Russia had acquired by the war a great store of glory. Glory did not depend upon motive; it often failed to stand a close examination. In this case it would bear any amount of scrutiny, at least as to results; for a great work of emancipation had been wrought. Ten millions of men well fitted for civilised life had made a stride onwards, either into complete freedom or out of debasing servitude, while the rest had acquired by the public law of Europe actual or constructive claims fraught with the hope of a similar advancement in an early future."

Never did the policy of a foreign Government receive a more emphatic certificate of approval than the verdict which Madame Novikoff's brilliant and convincing plea obtained from Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone did not confine himself to endorsing the recent policy of Russia. Directly challenged by Madame Novikoff to vindicate his impeachment of Russia as an "inappropriate instrument," to be used in achieving the liberty of Bulgaria, Mr. Gladstone had practically to admit that he was worsted in the encounter. As to the future of the Eastern Question, Mr. Gladstone was equally in accord with Madame Novikoff :—

"Nothing could be more explicit than the announcement of the general principle on which, and on which alone, the Balkan Peninsula—instead of being, as it has hitherto been, miserable and dangerous—could eventually be made happy in itself and harmless to the rest of the world.

"There remained Constantinople, a question of primary interest to the littoral states of the Euxine and to Austria-Hungary through the Danube, not as a matter of safety, but in regard to her commercial intercourse with the world. The language of 'O. K.' was, upon this 'last word of the Eastern Question,' as it was well called by Lord Derby, language for the most part of an outspoken transparency."

"This able writer," Mr. Gladstone continued, "quotes an incredible rumour that the English Government intended to incite Austria to occupy Constantinople when the collapse comes. It might, however, be a black and evil day for Europe should Austria be tempted to make the wild attempt. Perhaps it might even be said that such an attempt, and such an attempt alone, might result in throwing Constantinople into the hands of Russia. I do not speak of a transformed or an orthodox and Slavonic Austria. . . .

Should the only Austria known to history and tradition make the attempt she would give to Russia that which alone was wanting to render her truly formidable—namely, the place and part of the champion of freedom, independence, and nationality on behalf of the Balkan states."

Mr. Gladstone deprecated the "sanguine and light-hearted certificate" given to the Austro-German Alliance by Lord Salisbury, and intimated quite plainly that for his part he would prefer an Anglo-Russian understanding. He said :—

"The only Power whose interests were involved in the Eastern Question in a degree at all corresponding to those of Russia was Austria. But Austria was a house divided against itself. She could neither act nor even think without balancing her Slavs against her Magyars, or without having regard to a formidable personage that sat moodily in her rear. But Russia knew her own mind, was always on the spot, had a definite creed about Turkey, rested upon the sentiment of a united people, had acted, and might again act, alone. Surely those who believed Constantinople was the key to London ought in rational consistency to aim at some understanding about this matter of life and death with the Power which weighed so powerfully upon it. They could not be certain that they would not succeed, for the plain reason that they had not tried."

After making copious extracts from Madame Novikoff's letters, Mr. Gladstone said :—

"These citations will have been sufficient to convey a fair idea of the style, the talents, and the aim of our authoress ; and with these some useful lessons to our-

selves. Few will fail to recognise, amidst their stringency and pungency, a basis of good sense, and even of goodwill, together with much persuasive power. Those who, on a broader ground, may consult this book for indications of probable Russian and Slavonian policy as to the future of Eastern Europe will be at no loss to find what they seek.

"Thus the policy of the future is exhibited in these articles—Slavonic soil for the Slavs; Hellenic soil for the Hellenes; segregation of both in the districts of mixed race, in order that, when gifted with a political existence, they may feel for and find their way. No territorial claim advanced for Russia; none permitted for anybody else. Now let us look calmly into the future, and ask ourselves, in the calm of contemplation, whether this is not, so far as it goes, a reasonable and a desirable settlement for the east of Europe? If so, it is something to have it proclaimed in England from the mouth of a Russian in strong sympathy with her Slavonic compatriots, and, if unable to claim the sanction of her Government for her opinions, yet far from likely to promulgate what they would find unpalatable.

"As, then, these remarks began, so let them end with a tribute of just acknowledgment to this Russian authoress. She has not been heard of in any controversy anterior to the great struggle of the last four years, but her pen would do honour to a practised hand, and in truth she writes with a mixture of ingenuity, pungency, and tact which few, whether practised or unpractised, have at their command. As the atmosphere is cleared around us by the frank and unreserved interchange of opinions, a better state of things is gradually prepared, and prepared by the joint efforts of friends and of opponents, provided only

they speak out and keep to the point. To these conditions the volume now under view conforms. It probably did not require the name and the preface contributed by a distinguished historian in order to ensure its effectual introduction to the notice of the reading public in this country. It certainly pursues what is still the English method, as we have not yet got the Indian Press Act in force among us, of a fair and almost uniformly of a very courteous fight upon an open field. So that, quite irrespectively of concurrence with each of its particular opinions, its publication should be hailed with thankfulness, as a contribution to the cause of peace and to the consolidation, now sorely needed, of public order and confidence in Europe."

The reviews by Mr. Kinglake, M. de Laveleye, and others were brilliant appreciations of a book by competent critics. Mr. Gladstone's review was more than a criticism, it was a manifesto. Within a couple of months of being returned to power as the leader of a party commanding the allegiance of the majority of the nation, Mr. Gladstone proclaimed, in the hearing of the whole world, his whole-hearted acceptance of all the more important propositions laid down by Madame Novikoff as those which should govern the policy of Europe in dealing with the Eastern Question.

Madame Novikoff had indeed achieved a triumph without precedent. Like another Luther, she had written out in most uncompromising terms her theses on the Eastern Question, and had nailed them up in the sight of all the world to the nearest modern counterpart of the church door of Wittenberg. And Mr. Gladstone, leader of a party on the eve of victory, about to be summoned by his Sovereign to be Prime

Minister, reads through the Novikoffian theses, and then, in full hearing of all mankind, he declares: "I say ditto to Madame Novikoff!"

It was one of the most daring and defiant acts of Mr. Gladstone's life; a repetition, although on a much greater scale, of his action in publicly giving Madame Novikoff his arm and taking her to her hotel at the close of the St. James's Hall Conference.

Madame Novikoff was quick to appreciate the significance and the peril of Mr. Gladstone's action. She read the proof of his review, as may be imagined, with gratitude and delight. But when they met, Madame Novikoff, after thanking Mr. Gladstone for his kindness, said—

"But, Mr. Gladstone, it must never be published!"

Mr. Gladstone, somewhat startled, said, "Why not?"

"Because," she replied, "it will do you harm. You are just about to have a General Election. If this article appears now, all your enemies will use it against you."

Mr. Gladstone's eye fired. He exclaimed, bringing his hand down heavily as he used to pound the box on the table in the House of Commons—

"I will make them read it!"

Madame Novikoff was naturally delighted with Mr. Gladstone's refusal to accept her disinterested advice. She wrote to me:—

"Gladstone's review perfectly grand. So happy! His mention of my brother is most kind. Is this book not a good monument? Tell me is the cause of the Slavs now secured? I am happy indeed. Tuesday next at eight I leave England, my dear England—where there are men like Gladstone!!"

Mr. Froude, to whom the contents of the book were submitted in proof before he wrote the Preface, wrote to her on New Year's Day :—

"I think your conclusion is very good indeed. The English are vain, prejudiced blockheads, but they are not brutes, and a certain number of them at all events will be affected by a show of genuine feeling."

Mr. Carlyle was full of praise for the book. Madame Novikoff wrote to me :—

"*Tuesday, February* 7, 1880.

"Carlyle and Froude came as was promised. Carlyle seemed all right, and *perfectly enchanted* with the book. 'It'll be very, very useful,' said he. 'And all the details you give about the people you met are most interesting.' 'Oh,' said I, 'I am so glad to hear you say so. Mr. Froude will not regret having written the Preface.' 'You wanted no Preface,' interrupted the dear old man. 'I tell you the book is excellent. And I like that man Aksakoff,' continued he. 'We know so very little about Russia.'"

CHAPTER IV.

The Triumph of 1880.

IN one of the first of the O. K. letters, Madame Novikoff said that if there were two Russias there were also two Englands :—

"There is the England of St. James's Hall, and the England of the Guildhall; an England with a soul and a heart, and an England which has only a pocket. In other words, there is the England of Mr. Gladstone and the England of Lord Beaconsfield."

The two Englands tried conclusions as to which was the real England in the spring of 1880. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Adam, the Liberal Whip, and a few more, were confident as to the result of the appeal to the country. Madame Novikoff, writing after the Liberal victory, wrote :—

"It is a curious result of Constitutionalism that so few people can foresee the true course of events.

"I shall never forget the gloom and despondency which prevailed among the Liberals on the declaration of the Southwark Election. I was in London at that time. Wherever I went I was assured that a General Election would renew Lord Beaconsfield's power. The newspapers were as bad as the politicians. I only know one exception. Even after the Dissolution my London letters were filled with the most lugubrious

forebodings. Tell me, how is it that, with every possible apparatus for expressing public opinion, the voice of the nation should never make itself heard except at the ballot box ?

"Does the Babel of voices drown the voices of the nation ; and in politics, as in poetry, is it possible to be dark with excessive light ? "

While observers in England had been all at sea as to the result of the General Election, Madame Novikoff recalled the fact that General Skobeleff had confidently predicted the Liberal victory two years before the Dissolution. In her Life of Skobeleff Madame Novikoff said :—

"Skobeleff's knowledge of English politics was most remarkable. Immediately after the signature of the Treaty of Berlin—that is to say, in the autumn of 1878—two years before the General Election, and when, as I well remember, English Liberals were almost in despair over the prospects of their party, Skobeleff penned a memoir upon the political situation. He was then commanding south of the Balkans. In this memoir, he passed in review the changes which had from time to time taken place in the attitude of the different English parties towards Russia since 1840, and deduced from his historical epitome the remarkable but accurate conclusion that the Russophobist period in England was drawing to its close, and that, in accordance with the precedent of the past, the English nation was certain before very long to abandon the policy of systematic defiance, and adopt a more reasonable and less hostile attitude to the Russian Empire. He followed with a keen eye all the political and electoral manifestations of opinion in England, and, when the late Government was

complacently counting upon a new lease of power in return for 'Peace with Honour,' Skobeleff, with prophetic voice, declared that its days were numbered, and that a Government would be installed with which it would be possible for Russia to act in common."

The following letters from Mr. Froude during the electoral periods afford us interesting barometrical readings of the fluctuations of opinion in London :—

"*March* 8, 1880.—You will have heard of the *Dissolution*. It was given out this afternoon, and for the next two months all England will be in an uproar. The Tories will *win*, but they will win so hollow that I think they will be moderate even from the greatness of their victory. If Gladstone was not so good a man, one might fear that he would hang himself. He will not live to see the reaction. It will come, but not perhaps in his time or in mine."

"*March* 20, 1880.—I ought to be at home *voting* for the Radical candidate for Chelsea, but I don't mean to go, or to vote at all. The Radicals would have done very much the same as Lord Beaconsfield three years ago ; indeed I think they would have done worse, for the Tories would have supported them in a war policy, and they would themselves have gone into anything which would have given them temporary popularity. As it is, they are committed to the opposite view, and the best that can be wished is that they shall remain in opposition in sufficient strength to keep Lord Beaconsfield in order."

"*March* 21, 1880.—We shall be back by the time the *Elections* begin. We were all taken by surprise when the Dissolution was announced, and a fresh

Tory majority seemed a foregone conclusion. By degrees, however, the prospect has changed. Gladstone carries all Scotland before him. Scarcely one Conservative will be returned from Ireland, and the expectation now is that the Liberals will win. A sure sign is that the London papers are already trimming their sails, and preparing to shift their course.

"If it prove so, you, my dear lady, may take part of the credit to yourself, and when you come back next year you will find yourself the centre of the world's admiration. Gracious Majesty smiling sweetly on you, and rank, beauty, and fashion all at your feet. Then far up among the Celestials you will scarcely be able even to see your poor friends of the bad times, who do not court admittance into those circles. You will, however, perhaps fling us gracefully a rose of Paradise or two, and we will be grateful for small mercies."

"*April* 2, 1880.—You ought to write to Gladstone and congratulate him. A fortnight ago the *Times* said that Gladstone was the danger and difficulty of the Liberal party. It has discovered this morning that he has won the victory for them. He will win in Midlothian. Scotland as yet has not returned a single Conservative."

"*April* 3, 1880.—The papers will have told you how the elections are going. It is now certain that the Liberals will have a Majority. It is likely that they will have so large a Majority that Lord Beaconsfield will resign before the new Parliament meets. If the Germans have really been growing cool to Russia in reliance upon English Jingoism, they will have learnt a lesson which they will remember for the future.

"*You*, my dear friend, may flatter yourself that you have contributed not a little to this result. You will come back in the Autumn and be admired and fêted, and enjoy the triumph. I think that for a time a change will really do good, but I have no belief, as you know, that any real statesmanship can be had out of our modern Parliamentary system. We must be thankful for small mercies. Gladstone has prevented a war between Russia and England. The time may be used now, when Gladstone will be in office again, to hold him to the language which he has used in opposition."

"*April* 11, 1880.—I dined one night with Lord Granville. Hartington was there, and there was some little confidential talk about things, but it came to nothing. I think better of Lord Granville than of any other politician on either side, but he too is only a *considerable* man, not a great man.

"The new Cabinet is not formed, but we can guess tolerably what it is to be. There is no lack of *speech* among them. They will be a Cabinet of orators. Before two generations, probably before one, the English Cæsar will make an end of them and their palaver.

"But you will be far more interested about our political revolution. It is like the bursting of some great reservoir. We are yet to see what it will do and what it will sweep away; but the force, such as it is, is irresistible. The Liberals are almost two to one, and I think they will insist that Gladstone shall lead them. We as yet know nothing, but opinion points this way, and the suspicion that the Queen hates him will only make the country more determined to force him upon her.

"The Jingoes are dead. The sweet voices who shouted for Beaconsfield now shout as loudly for his rival. No one remembers the few poor men who stood to their colours when it was social ostracism to say a word for Russia. It is lucky, as I always told you, that the Liberals were in opposition when the crisis came; they would have been as bad to deal with as the Tories. They have committed themselves, and cannot back out. But do not trust them. They think of nothing but a sure majority in the next election."

Mr. Kinglake thus records the victory of the good cause:—

"*April* 2, 1880.

"Well, Miss, Heaven is prospering your machinations in this country, for the election is going on in a way that must deprive the Mountebank of power. At Leeds (where you went, Miss, to encourage your orators) they have given a vote of honour to your friend Gladstone, by electing him, though a candidate for Midlothian, and giving him over the Tory next on the Poll a majority of 24,000 to 13,000.

"I can fancy, then, that you will be very happy at the result of the election.—Your affectionate

"A. W. K."

"*April* 14, 1880.

"Your victory, Miss, at the English elections has been as complete as even you could have desired, and to-day the Cabinet meets to determine whether it will resign upon the return of the Queen within a few days, or protract its merely nominal existence a few days longer.

"Your dear Gladstone has attained to a position

of singular grandeur, and for the moment at least there is a state of real bliss at Hawarden—bliss greatly heightened by the sudden discovery that the young Herbert Gladstone is a born orator.

"There is a very general feeling that Gladstone ought to be compelled to be Prime Minister, but his reluctance is real. I suppose you have long ago written or telegraphed your congratulations.—Your affectionate A. W. K."

Madame Novikoff was naturally delighted with the result of the elections. Mr. Gladstone's cause was her cause. She recognised regretfully that "no charge had been more freely brought against the Liberals than the great and heinous crime of having well-wishers in Russia," but she gladly declared in a letter written to the *Northern Echo* from Moscow, April 22 :—

"In spite of all repudiations on your part, the Slavophiles of Moscow and the Liberals of England were fighting the same battle in the same cause against the same foe. In your triumph we rejoice, as in our triumph you rejoiced. The watchword of the campaign which freed Bulgaria was uttered at Blackheath. We but executed the bag-and-baggage policy which Mr. Gladstone had advocated. Lord Beaconsfield interfered. The sepulchre of Macedonian freedom was sealed with the signet of the English Premier. It was for you to act, and you have acted. Lord Beaconsfield is overthrown. With the fall of the enemy of Eastern freedom the great stone was rolled away from the mouth of the Eastern sepulchre, and the quickening rays of liberty already revive the nationalities which Lord Beaconsfield entombed. How can we help rejoicing at this great good fortune which has attended the campaign

against the common enemy of English Liberalism and the Christians of the East? The rejoicing of some of us . . . at the success of the Liberals at the elections is, therefore, a proof, not that the Slavophiles believe the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield removes an obstacle from the path of their aggressive designs, but rather that they contemplate no such designs, and welcome a Liberal Ministry as affording an opportunity of mutual co-operation for the attainment of common ends—ends which have been proclaimed as the programme of the English Liberals."

But Madame Novikoff frankly admitted that the generous confidence of Moscow Slavophiles in Mr. Gladstone was by no means shared by all Russians. Most Russians, she said, expected very little from the Liberal Government :—

"The Slavonic race hails in Mr. Gladstone the English champion of the Bulgarians ; but in the exalted regions where influential personages detest the very name of Slavs, the English Liberal leader is declared to be far more dangerous to Russia than Lord Beaconsfield. To their Russia, perhaps, not to ours.

"But some better-informed and sanguine Russians do entertain hopes that affairs will take a turn for the better with the return of Mr. Gladstone to power."

It is interesting, after the lapse of eighteen years, to see what Madame Novikoff set forward as the policy in which Russian Slavophiles hoped to be able to join forces with Liberal England. In Europe and Asia her proposal was that the two Powers should seek a common object—the development of the liberties and independence of the subject races of the Turk—by means of concerted action for the coercion of the

Sultan. She hoped that the two Powers would work together to redress the grievances of Armenia and those of the Balkan peoples. She said :—

"We surely shall not be disappointed in expecting that energetic measures will be taken to secure to those Bulgarians of Macedonia the protection of which they were deprived by Lord Beaconsfield."

But she was under no illusions as to the impossibility of dispensing with active measures. She wrote :—

"Coercion is the key of the situation. Everything depends upon the resolution of the English Government to say to the Turks, 'You must.' The Turks will do nothing without coercion, and unless the Liberal Government is prepared to apply coercion the Berlin Treaty will never be fulfilled.

"In Central Asia there is, as Mr. Gladstone says, hardly any alternative between a cordial, good understanding and bitter hostility. The one is a pledge and security for peace ; the other is the precursor of war. It is for the new Government to say which must prevail."

It is a melancholy commentary upon the vanity of human expectations that the Gladstone Government of 1880, when it quitted office in 1885, had done nothing for Macedonia, had done nothing for Armenia, and had brought Russia and England to the verge of war over a frontier question in Central Asia.

But that disappointment was mercifully hidden from the jubilating enthusiasts in both countries. Madame Novikoff's Russian friends had regarded her predictions of Lord Beaconsfield's overthrow as too good to be true. After the Elections the tone of the *Moscow Gazette* became more friendly. Lord Dufferin,

noting this and recognising its cause, wrote to Madame Novikoff (June 11, 1880):—

"I am delighted to find that under your auspices and judicious discipline Mr. Katkoff is learning to appreciate us."

Mr. Freeman was not long in taking alarm lest the zeal of the new Government should grow cool. He reconciled himself by an effort to Mr. Gladstone's apology to Austria, but the courtesy of the Queen's letter to the Sultan provoked an angry protest. Writing, July 28, 1880, to Madame Novikoff, he said:—

"I do not like the notion of our Queen, who is at any rate a decent Christian woman, writing to the cruel savage at Constantinople in a very *courteous* style. It is just that courtesy (which was not shown to Shere Ali and Cetewayo, far more respectable people than Abdul Hamid) which spoils the whole thing. The stick, as Labouchère said, is the only argument for the Turk. Your people have been just as bad as ours in this mistake of showing civility to the Turk. It comes out of the original mistake of treating the Turk as a civilised being, instead of like any other savage. A good deal of wretchedness and bloodshed has come out of the mere title of 'Majesty.'"

The gilt, however, soon began to be rubbed off the gingerbread. Writing on May 23, Mr. Kinglake said:—

"Fancy, after all the thunders of Midlothian, our coming down in the Queen's Speech to 'ground game' (that means rabbits, Miss) and to the burial of Dissenters!

"The choice of Lord Ripon (a Catholic convert) for

India has given great offence to masses of people, and the measure seems to have been *pur parti*; but I suppose there must be some explanation to it I know not of. I have been pained about Stansfeld, for I like him much personally. I should hope that something has been promised, or otherwise said, that would do something towards allaying any sense of mortification he may have."

Mr. Kinglake was not the only man to be pained at the way in which the sterling merits of Sir James Stansfeld were passed over by Mr. Gladstone. And the slight was all the worse because Mr. Gladstone, who was many years Stansfeld's senior, explained his refusal to appoint him to the office on the plea that Stansfeld was too old.

One of the first things to disturb the equanimity of the stalwart Gladstonians was what was generally called Mr. Gladstone's apology to Austria.

In his fourth Midlothian speech, March 17, 1880, Mr. Gladstone had made a vigorous attack upon Austria. He said :—

"Austria has been the steady, unflinching foe of freedom of every country in Europe. Russia has been the friend of Slavonic freedom; but Austria has never been the friend even of Slavonic freedom. Austria trampled Italy underfoot. Austria resisted the unity of Germany. Austria did all she could to prevent the creation of Belgium. Austria never lifted a finger for the regeneration and constitution of Greece. There is not an instance, there is not a spot upon the whole map where you can lay your finger and say, there Austria did good. In the Congress of Berlin Austria resisted the extension of freedom and did not promote it."

When Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister this speech stood in the way of good relations with Austria-Hungary. Oral and written communications took place between Mr. Gladstone and Count Karolyi, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at the Court of St. James, after which Mr. Gladstone wrote his famous Apology on May 4, 1880. In this letter Mr. Gladstone explained that " grave apprehensions had been excited in my mind lest Austria should play a part in the Balkan Peninsula hostile to the freedom of the emancipated populations and to the reasonable and warranted hopes of the subjects of the Sultan. Your Excellency is now good enough to assure me that your Government has no desire whatever to extend or add to the rights it has acquired under the Treaty of Berlin, and that any such extension would be actually prejudicial to Austria-Hungary. Permit me at once to state to your Excellency that had I been in possession of such an assurance as I have now been able to receive I never would have uttered any one of the words which your Excellency justly describes as of a painful and wounding character.

" Whether it was my misfortune or my fault that I was not so supplied I will not now attempt to determine, but will at once express my serious concern that I should, in default of it, have been led to refer to transactions of an earlier period, or to use terms of censure which I can now wholly banish from my mind. I think that the explanation I now tender should be made not less public than the speech which has supplied the occasion for it ; and as to the form of such publicity, I desire to accede to your Excellency's wish."

Mr. Freeman wrote on May 16 :—

"I wish Gladstone had not written that letter to Karolyi. It gives occasion to the enemy to blaspheme. Only a man with a very tender conscience could have written it, and those who have no consciences of course mock. But he had said nothing but what was true. I assume, of course, that Francis Joseph and Karolyi are lying—what else should they do?"

Again he wrote on June 24 :—

"It is not Gladstone but the King of the Ogres and his henchman who really ate the humble pie. Gladstone must have known that Karolyi and his master are lying, and that they meant to bag everything they could. They told the lie, which diplomatically Gladstone had to believe, like other diplomatic lies. But he gave them warning that all such things must stop. I read it like the verdict of the Welsh jury : 'Not guilty ; but he had better not do it again.'"

Mr. Froude referred to this subject in a letter to Madame Novikoff dated May 14, 1880 :—

"I hear nothing of the new Cabinet. Gladstone, I have always told you, dislikes me as much as so great a man can dislike an insignificant one. And I, on my side, am conscious of an antipathy of which I could find the grounds if I looked for them. The clubs are chuckling now over his 'abject apology' to Austria : though I do not care for G., I see nothing abject about it. It was perfectly true that a scheme was on foot for Austria to seize Bulgaria and eventually Constantinople. That was the 'glad tidings of great joy.' The fate of the Tories put an end to it. The Austrians made haste to say that the whole story

was a fabrication; and Gladstone says that if that is so, he withdraws his charge. To those who are behind the scenes, it is merely irony. The *Quarterly*, you see, gives *you* credit for the result of the elections. And agrees with Gladstone that the Book did not want the Preface, and would have been better without it. I always told you so; but at all events you have done good service. You have helped to prevent a general European conflagration, and you ought to be happy. I too contributed something three years ago, when I induced Carlyle to write that *letter*."

As I have not mentioned this letter to which Mr. Froude here makes reference—a letter which rendered great service to the cause of peace—I quote here the passage referring to the subject in Mr. Froude's *Thomas Carlyle: Life in London*:—

"Thomas Carlyle writes, April 28:—

"'Dismal rumours are afloat that Dizzy secretly intends to break in upon the Russian-Turkish War, and, supporting himself by his Irish Home Rulers, great troop of commonplace Tories, Jews, etc., suddenly get Parliament to support him in a new Philo-Turk war against Russia—the maddest thing human imagination could well conceive. I am strongly urged to write something further upon it, but cannot feel that I have anything new to say.'

"Events move fast in these days, and one nail drives out another; but we all remember the Winter campaign which brought the Russians to Constantinople and the English fleet to the Dardanelles. Opinion in England was all but prepared to allow the Government to throw itself into the fray—all but —but not entirely. If initiative could be forced

upon the Russians, those who wished for a fresh struggle could have it. A scheme was said to have been formed either to seize Gallipoli or to take some similar step, under pretence of protecting English interests, which would have driven Russia, however reluctant she might be, into a declaration of war. The plan, whatever it may have been, was kept a secret; but there is reason to believe that preparations were actually made, that commanders were chosen, and instructions were almost on their way which would have committed the country beyond recall. Carlyle heard of this,—not, as he said, from idle rumour, but from some authentic source,—and he heard, too, that there was not a moment to lose. On the 5th of May he writes to his brother :—

"'After much urgency and with a dead-lift effort, I have this day got issued through the *Times* a small indispensable deliverance on the Turk and Dizzy question. Dizzy, it appears, to the horror of those who have any interest in him and his proceedings, has decided to have a new war for the Turk against all mankind; and this letter hopes to drive a nail through his mad and maddest speculations on that side.'

"The letter to the *Times* was brief, not more than three or four lines, but it was emphatic in its tone, and was positive about the correctness of the information. Whether he was right, or whether some one had misled him, there is no evidence before the public to show. But the secret, if secret there was, had thus been disclosed prematurely. The letter commanded attention as coming from a man who was unlikely to have spoken without grounds, and any unexpected shock, slight though it may be, will disturb a critical operation. This was Carlyle's

last public act in this world; and if he contributed ever so little to preventing England from committing herself to a policy of which the mischief would have been immeasurable, counterbalanced by nothing save a brief popularity to the Tory party, it was perhaps also the most useful act in his whole life."—*Thomas Carlyle: Life in London*, vol. ii. pp. 441–42.

According to Mr. Kinglake, it was Mr. Hayward who "initiated the business that Europe has been making such a fuss about and that enables Count Karolyi to wake and find himself famous."

On the same day on which Mr. Gladstone penned his letter to Count Karolyi he wrote to Madame Novikoff intimating that under the stress of his onerous duties she must not expect so many letters as of old:—

"Downing Street, *May* 4, 1880.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I thank you for your kind letter. A great change and a strange one has passed upon me. In respect to speech, I pass under new conditions. For the time, I hope the short time, during which I personally may continue in office, I shall have very heavy labour; for I have felt obliged to be Finance Minister as well as head of the Government.

"All private and personal communications will, I fear, as a rule be beyond my reach. Indeed, I should be ashamed to confess to you how rare have been, even heretofore, my communications with my own children. But, in regard to our Foreign Policy, I would say we shall have no prejudices and no preferences, no plots, and above all no resentments. In a few weeks the state of affairs will probably have required us to make trial by practical discussions of

the dispositions of all the chief Governments. But the dispositions with which we shall approach these discussions will be such as I have described.

"I am truly concerned to hear of your son's illness, but I gather with satisfaction from your letter that his state no longer caused you anxiety.—Sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Froude wrote to Madame Novikoff, August 3, 1880 :—

"So far as Russia is concerned, I suppose Gladstone is acting wisely and in the true interest of your country and ours—the more the pity, in this aspect of things, that he is ill, and perhaps is at the end of his career. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi.* There are plenty of aspirants to power, with all Gladstone's faults and none of his virtues, who in their mean, miserable hearts will be delighted if he is out of the way henceforward. We are in a strange state here. I know not what will come of it. I see only that the franchise as it is now worked in England brings not the best men to the front, but the worst. Gladstone and Beaconsfield were both bred in the old-fashioned school, and though they have aspired, each in his way, to play a figure with the new ideas, and so have gone near to running us on the rocks, they have, both of them, qualities which will not be found in their successors. The English Empire is a great thing, and the English nature, though given over to worship idols, has yet elements of recovery in it. Both will by and by reassert themselves, but I expect there will be fine Iconoclasm one of those days—such a pulling down of Constitutional Temples as has not been seen since the end of the Roman Republic."

Mr. Gladstone was as good as his word. He did not write again until the Session was over and the process of coercing the Turk to compel him to cede Dulcigno to Montenegro was in full swing.

Madame Novikoff wrote to Mr. Gladstone in September to inform him that the Russian Government had heard that the Nihilists were hatching a plot in England to blow up the Tsar's yacht, the *Livadia*. Mr. Gladstone replied :—

"HAWARDEN, *September* 25, 1880.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I sympathise with your alarms, and I will at once convey to the Foreign Office the statement out of which they grow.

"I can venture to assure you that the best means at our command would be used for following to its sources any evidence bearing upon such a subject and for the prevention of a detestable crime.

"You will, however, perceive that you have conveyed the matter to me only in the form of a rumour. I cannot doubt that if you are correctly informed particulars will be given us on which we can act.

"The Grand Duke Constantine was extremely gracious, and I was struck with his intelligent and active mind.

"Well, I date my letter on a critical day, for I have just been reading our telegrams of Thursday night from Cettinje, and I suppose that to-day the action may begin, which now seems inevitable.

"The shifts and falsehoods of the Sultan in the Montenegrin Question since we have been in office have beaten everything I had ever before known or heard of.

"God defend the right, and send us a speedy issue.

"The Government will not meet in London till

early in November. Events might draw me up for a day or two at any time.—I remain sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

A fortnight later he communicated with her again upon the same subject :—

"*October* 4, 1880.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I send for your private perusal the information I have received about the threat against the *Livadia*. I thank you so much for the tea. If I can I shall give myself the pleasure of calling on you, but the pressure of telegrams at present is both great and capricious. Nothing from the Turk as yet, 1 p.m. nearly.—Yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Novikoff having written expressing some misgivings as to the conduct of Sir Henry Elliott, then Ambassador at Vienna, Mr. Gladstone wrote :—

"*October* 16, 1880.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—Good work has been done in the Dulcigno business, but the Turk has not acted yet.

"I have had the misfortune to differ from Sir H. Elliott on Eastern politics, but I am bound to say that I place entire reliance upon his honour, and I am satisfied he does not knowingly fall short in the discharge of any of his important duties as the Agent of the British Government at Vienna.—Believe me sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

It was on October 15 that the Prince of Montenegro received the official notification of the Turks' surrender of Dulcigno. A fortnight later Mr. Gladstone wrote to her again :—

"HAWARDEN CASTLE,
November 1, 1880.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I should venture partially to revise your notice of Mr. Paton's sonnets—as verse they appear to me to be very good, but he should have had a better theme.

"I am reluctant to enter into the unprofitable task of sifting and weighing all the things said or said to have been said, by persons more or less mysterious, either of me or of those with whom I am connected, especially since new rumours are so lately circulated about us on the Continent. You know how foolish I think that in many things we English are. But I must say I do not think we form with as much precipitancy as some others do opinions on questions purely internal to their country. The present Government, I venture to say, could not possibly be in better health than it now is; but, according to some foreign judges, and even rather great ones, it is moribund, if not dead.

"We have often differed from Sir H. Elliott on various phases of the Eastern Question, but I am confident that he strives to serve faithfully those whom he represents.—Believe me yours most faithfully, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Adam, then editing the *Nouvelle Revue* in Paris, transmitted through her friend, Madame Novikoff, an earnest appeal for a contribution from Mr. Gladstone's pen. As might have been predicted, he refused:—

"10 DOWNING STREET,
November 6, 1880.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I am sorry to seem rude in declining such a flattering invitation as that

of Madame Adam, but I regret to say that my present official responsibilities prevent me from venturing on any fresh appearance in the pages of any review, however distinguished. I have often sympathised with and admired the spirit of her Foreign articles. I find much that is attractive in that of the new number. I do not quite understand in the new number the renunciation that is ascribed to *L'Angleterre et La France*.—I remain most faithfully yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

The next letter relates to an opinion to which Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace appears to have given expression—that there had been a breakdown of concerted Coercion in the Adriatic :—

"*November* 9, 1880.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I thank you for your letter and its enclosure, which I return. When Mr. Wallace speaks of a breakdown, I am in doubt whether he means a breakdown with Dulcigno surrendered or without it. I don't know whether you will be able to inform me.—I remain most faithfully yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

On November 23, Sir J. Arthur Godley, then Mr. Gladstone's private secretary, wrote :—

"Mr. Gladstone desires me to say that the pressure of public business is very heavy at present, but that if possible he will endeavour to call."

Pressure of public business was, however, too great. Mr. Gladstone did not call, but Madame Novikoff was more than consoled for the disappointment by receiving the following letter with its high personal tribute to the value of her services :—

"*November* 28, 1880.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I am very sorry to have been obliged to leave town without acceding to your kind request; for I should have been glad to convey to you personally the expression of my concurrence in your feeling about the treatment to which you have been subjected by a portion of the Tory or Jingo Press. I say a portion of it only, and indeed it is bad enough that there should be such a portion; but I know of its existence from experience. I and those like me are fair game, but you ought on every ground to have been exempt. I shall always consider, without knowing anything below the surface, that your temperate, highly clear and acute, and above all open and fearless statement of Russian views and Slav ideas in the midst of us during an angry and excited time has been a real service to the cause of man and of national goodwill; and moreover, I am ashamed of any fellow-countryman who is so purblind as not to see this obvious truth.

"We must meet again in Cabinet about the 15th. A happy journey be yours. The thought of Montenegrin peasants in Dulcigno and this district, though the subject be small, is in principle one for great thankfulness. Again I must say that, so far as I have seen and known, we have had from your Government nothing but loyal and effective help. I have little doubt but that, had not the stroke acted without being struck, three of us at least would have gone to Smyrna.—Yours sincerely,

"W. E. Gladstone.

"If you see Miss Irby, pray tell her I am quite ready to subscribe again to her schools on hearing her address.

"P.S.—My wife tells me Miss I. is in your hotel. I therefore take the liberty to enclose a cheque."

The allusion to Smyrna is to the intention of the three Governments (England, Russia, and Italy) to have seized the Custom House at Smyrna if the Sultan had not given way about Dulcigno.

Madame Novikoff rarely intervened in the discussion of any domestic problem. But she made exceptions—rare exceptions—and never unless she could thereby help Russia. One of these exceptional interventions was the writing of the following letter to Mrs. Duncan M'Laren, who had invited her to attend a public meeting to discuss the Married Women's Property Bill:—

"7 Melville Street, Edinburgh,
October 13, 1880.

"Dear Madam,—I feel greatly obliged to you for your kind invitation, and regret sincerely my inability to attend your meeting, the object of which to me is as interesting as surprising. I could even add surprising and amazing. How is it possible that married women's rights of property can still form a topic for discussions, debates, and struggles in constitutional, philanthropic, civilised England? I am a Russian, a thorough Russian, and a 'Muscovite,' and we have no constitutional Government. . . .

"But in my *un*constitutional country, no woman, whether she be very rich or not, very highly or humbly placed, is deprived of her property by marriage. When she dies, her husband only gets a seventh part of what she possessed. There are even cases when the wife may give away, by her will, all she has to whomsoever she likes. According to the law, property is divided in equal parts among all her sons, while

every daughter gets a fourteenth. But in most cases parents leave wills greatly equalising the inheritance of sons and daughters.

"A husband enjoys his property under the same conditions as the wife, and thus the widow receives also the seventh part of the property immediately after his death. This is the reason why when marriages are arranged or discussed, money and property questions are as a rule never referred to, which, I dare say, will sound here almost incredible, like many other truths about Russia.

"Well, I admit we are behind the times.—Yours truly, OLGA NOVIKOFF, *NÉE* KIRÉEFF."

CHAPTER V.

Crossing Swords with Mr. Gladstone.

MADAME NOVIKOFF was very grateful to Mr. Gladstone. That great statesman had uniformly treated her with the chivalrous courtesy due to a great lady and the profound intellectual respect due to a great diplomatist. He had been the foremost champion of the cause dearer to her than life, and he had never feared to avow the high regard in which he held her services to the Slavs. In her turn she had conducted a vigorous propaganda in the Russian Press in favour of Mr. Gladstone's policy. She had defended him against all gainsayers, she had explained away all misunderstandings, and she had the satisfaction of knowing that Mr. Gladstone's name and fame stood as high in Russia as they did among the Liberals of England.

But, although the informal alliance was based upon political conviction as well as personal sentiment, it was quite consistent with lively passages of arms between the allies. These collisions never disturbed the cordiality of their personal relations. Madame Novikoff, a Russian patriot first and foremost, never hesitated to cross swords with Mr. Gladstone whenever in her opinion he did injustice to the Russian Government or the Russian people.

It is necessary to refer to at least one of these typical encounters. Mr. Gladstone was not merely an inter-

national statesman, he was also a very shrewd and resourceful party leader. When he saw a debating point to be gained that would enable him to score against his Conservative opponents, we have seen that it was quite impossible for him to sacrifice that point out of regard to the susceptibilities of his foreign allies, whose votes counted for nothing at the next Election. This turn of mind it was which led him to retort upon the Conservatives, who had been continually abusing him as a friend of Russia, by an essay in which he proved to his own satisfaction that it was the Conservatives, not the Liberals, who in the past hundred years had been the friends of Russia. Mr. Gladstone's article entitled "The Friends and Foes of Russia" appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* for January. He had touched upon this sore spot in a previous article in the same Review (Feb. 1878), when he described Russia as "a Power whose action in European policy has been as a rule on the side opposed to English sympathies." But in the article on "The Friends and Foes of Russia" he went much farther. He declared that, "unless in cases of pure exception, Russia has uniformly and habitually ranged herself in European politics with the antagonists of freedom." And again he said: "Everywhere, except in Turkey, Russian statesmanship has headed and sustained the votaries of reaction with the support and sympathy of English Toryism." He even declared that Russia was the most inappropriate of instruments for the liberation of Bulgaria. When the latter article appeared I wrote to Madame Novikoff:—

"You will read his words with indignation, no doubt; but Mr. Gladstone means well, and you will do well not to take offence."

Madame Novikoff observed, not without reason :—

"I don't see why we should be described as 'inappropriate instruments' for securing the liberation of our co-religionists, the Slavs of the Balkan, because we believe in a system of government which freed Russia from the yoke of the Tartars and enabled us to take giant strides in civilising and educating our people."

Curiously enough, the newspaper which reported that remark of Mr. Gladstone's contained a dispatch from Bulgaria mentioning that the liberated Bulgarians had just passed an address of gratitude to those said "inappropriate instruments" of their emancipation. The Duke of Argyll agreed with the Bulgarians. He said :—

"Russia's ancient and hereditary hostility to the Moslem Empire of the Turks has made her power *a fitting instrument* in the gradual destruction of the most desolating dominion that has ever cursed the world."

Madame Novikoff replied to Mr. Gladstone in three letters published in the *Northern Echo* entitled "Friends or Foes," "Russia and English Parties," and "Russia's Foreign Policy." The articles are typical of Madame Novikoff's polemical style, and illustrate very forcibly the readiness to give and to take hard knocks which distinguished both controversialists. She began her "Friends or Foes" letter as follows :—

"'I desire nothing from you; I do not come to you in a precarious way, *non ut cliens, sed ut amicus*. My business is to make you an offer of that which is worthy of acceptance by any prince in Europe, the friendship of the English Commonwealth, which, if you please to embrace it on just and honourable

terms, will be for your advantage as well as ours. If not, you yourselves will have as much prejudice as any other by the refusal.'

"Such was the straightforward declaration made by an English Ambassador when the Swedish Chancellor Oxenstierne asked him what England desired from Sweden.

"This is one of the numerous cases in which Russians could have nothing better to do than to follow the English example. I am not in any sense an ambassador, I simply state my own views, as well as those of many Russians; but were I to speak in the name of Russia to England I could not find better terms of expressing the feeling which alone can guarantee a real, cordial alliance between us.

"We do not want your patronage any more than you want ours. Believe me, the insults, the injuries of these last times have not increased the enthusiasm or the number of your friends in Russia. Has it really come to this, that friendship to Russia is treason to England? The irritation and resentment occasioned amongst all classes of the Russian people by your menaces and insults have created a formidable barrier between the two nations. Yet, my firm impression is, that if England determines upon a new departure in her dealings with Russia, your advances will receive a warmer welcome from us than you extended to ours. The initiative this time must come from you; we can do no more."

She then quoted John Bright's words: "'There are two policies before us—an old policy which, if we leave it to our children, will be a legacy of future wars; and a new policy for which I contend and which I preach, by the adoption of which we shall leave to our country,

not a legacy of war, but a legacy of peace and of a growing and lasting friendship with one of the greatest Empires in the world.' To that," said Madame Novikoff, "with all my heart, I subscribe."

In the letter on "Russia and English Parties" she began :—

"It sometimes amuses me to see your papers declaring that Russians place all their hopes on the accession of the English Liberals to office. To imagine that Russians generally entertain great hopes of the entente cordiale with England if the Liberals return to power is decidedly a mistake. The majority attribute the speeches of the Opposition to party spirit, and I regret to say are very sceptical as to the reality of Liberal devotion to the cause of the Christians in the East. A solitary voice is sometimes raised in the Russian Press expressing unshaken faith in the honour and sincerity of the English Liberals, but it is *vox clamantis in deserto*, and then the Editor who inserts the article emphatically declares that he does not share its sentiments, for one is as bad as the other, and after these years no one can trust an Englishman. It is very painful for me to admit that Russians distrust the Liberals almost as much as the Conservatives, because it is to some slight extent the confession of my own failure. Yes, my utmost efforts have completely failed to inspire my countrymen with confidence in the reality of Liberal devotion to the cause of emancipation in the East. They hope little and expect less.

"Nor is it only in the East that the Russians have been led to regard with some indifference the fortunes of political warfare in England. What was the Liberal contention at the commencement of the Afghan war ?

I remember distinctly the cheers that hailed Mr. Gladstone's declaration at Greenwich that if war had to be made, it ought to have been made with Russia, not with Afghanistan.

"I mention these matters with great regret. It is with almost a greater sacrifice to my own feelings that I allude to the unfortunate effect occasioned in Russia by Mr. Gladstone's article in the *Nineteenth Century* for January 1879 on 'The Friends and Foes of Russia,' for its allusion to our volunteers in Servia rendered it very precious to me, and it abounds with such generous tributes to the reality of our liberating work in Bulgaria that it is most painful to refer to it except in terms of gratitude.

"In Russia Mr. Gladstone seemed so great in his magnificent advocacy of the cause of the oppressed that we regarded him with feelings of enthusiastic admiration. When our best and bravest had died for that noble cause, when every Russian home was saddened by the thought of those 'who went, but who returned no more,' and when Lord Beaconsfield was straining every nerve to bring about a war to re-enslave the Bulgarians, we were cheered by the spectacle of Mr. Gladstone contending, almost single-handed but with unwavering resolution, against those who wished to destroy the liberating work which our armies had accomplished.

"His efforts were unsuccessful. Southern Bulgaria was 'restored to the Turk,' and Montenegro shorn of her territory. But, none the less for that, Mr. Gladstone has stamped his name in imperishable characters on every Slavonic heart. In the liberation of Bulgaria we had been allies—not foes, but friends united by a common enthusiasm and by mutual sympathy; and we believed that if ever he returned

to power the memory of that great campaign for liberty would render possible that longed-for consummation — the establishment of a hearty entente and the most friendly understanding between England and Russia for the complete deliverance of the Eastern Christians.

"I still share that hope, but, unfortunately, the exigencies of party warfare in England have led to its abandonment by many Russians. The article on 'The Friends and Foes of Russia' was, no doubt, an effective polemic. It may have served an excellent party purpose to have retorted on the Conservatives their utterly unfounded charge of undue predilection for Russia, but its effect was anything but excellent in Russia. A slight from a friend is worse than a blow from a foe. To many Russians it seemed as if Mr. Gladstone, the only foreign statesman whom they had regarded with absolute confidence and esteem, was repudiating almost as an insult the charge that he entertained friendly feelings for their country. 'Well,' they exclaimed, 'if even Mr. Gladstone regards our friendship as a stigma to be affixed upon the Conservative party and repudiated as a disgrace for the Liberals, let us not dream any longer of a good understanding with England.' It was in vain I pointed out that, even in that very article, Mr. Gladstone said, 'The standing motto of Liberals is friendship with every country,' and that the friendship with Russia which he repudiated was not the loyal friendship of great peoples, but an undue subserviency to the wishes of a foreign Power. I was told that Mr. Gladstone assumed, as a matter of course, that Russia would in the future naturally and inevitably pursue a policy in Europe hostile to freedom and humanity; and, of course, with such a policy no real friendship is possible. 'If Mr.

Gladstone,' they added, 'could say such things, what chance is there of any Liberal Government entertaining friendly relations with Russia?' If Russia is to be assumed, even by those who sympathised most deeply with her great work of liberation, to be the eternal foe of freedom and humanity, 'except when she departs from herself,' of course the only relation England should maintain towards Russia would be one of opposition.

"But surely Russia, which played some little part in the liberation of Italy, in the unification of Germany, in the emancipation of Greece, Servia, Roumania, and Bulgaria, and which, without any pressure from without or any revolution at home, has liberated twenty-two millions of her own serfs,—a fact too often forgotten by our supreme judges,—is not justly assumed to be predestined to 'oppose freedom in all its forms'? But why assume a guilt which has not yet been committed?

"The feeling in Russia with regard to the repeated rebuffs which we have received at the hands of England is one of indignation. These advances, they say, should never have been made. Russia is not going to implore anybody's friendship, not even that of England. Pardon me, but the very idea makes me smile. Boasting and blustering may not be our characteristic, but we really are not so humble as some imagine. If England wishes for our friendship, it is not wise to repel every attempt on our part to promote a good understanding. Fortunately, Russia is not depending for her greatness and her existence upon the goodwill of any other country, not even on that of England.

"The future is ours!

"The Germans have reached their day, the English

their midday, the French their afternoon, the Italians their evening, the Spaniards their night, but the Slavs stand on the threshold of the morning."

Her third letter was entitled "Russian Foreign Policy, a reply to Mr. Gladstone." It was an acceptance of his challenge. She begins :—

"In party polemics, Liberals sometimes, with little regard for our feelings, say that Russia on the Continent has, with few exceptions, supported a reactionary policy which commanded the support of English Conservatives. Now, English Liberals tolerate free and plain speaking ; they not seldom display a noble courage in confessing their error, if it is proved that any of their passing remarks are contrary to some facts which may easily have slipped from their memory at the time. This encourages me to insist upon certain truths which appear to be forgotten. Russia is not infallible, and if you are only happy in referring to our shortcomings, do so as often as you like ; but, judging from the speeches of some of your best statesmen, whose opinions are weighty and well-informed, our policy has been throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century more in accordance with the mature views of English Liberalism than the policy of England herself."

"In the East," she proceeds to point out, "events have justified the policy of Russia. English Liberals have at last realised the iniquity of supporting the Turk, which the Tsar Boris Godounoff had in vain pressed upon England in Queen Elizabeth's time. 'Yes,' replies Mr. Gladstone, 'I admit that in the East Russia has marched in the van of progress, but it was only a noble inconsistency. Elsewhere she has been the persistent foe of freedom, the dis-

turber of peace, a standing menace to the independence of nations—in short, a fitting ally of English Conservatives.' Where are the proofs? I am referred to Belgium and Hungary. I do not defend our intervention in Hungary, which Mr. Gladstone himself says 'is supported by the practice of older and more advanced countries, and cannot be compared in guilt of details with our intervention in the Two Sicilies only half a century before.' In the case of Belgium, whatever faults there may have been in Russian policy —and the worst that can be charged against her is a lack of zeal and some indecision in the first stages of the affair—was far more than atoned for by the protection she extended to Belgium in 1851, when but for Russia Napoleon would have annexed Belgium."

After an eloquent reference to the services rendered by Russia under Alexander I., who saved England from invasion several weeks before the battle of Trafalgar, and who said with truth, "We have given back to Europe her liberty and independence," Madame Novikoff continued: "The policy of Russia from 1819–1825, although it commanded the warm admiration of the English Conservatives, I do not defend, though I would not condemn. Europe, still shaking with the earthquake of the French Revolution, was not inclined to tolerate insurrectionary movements, and Alexander, who was the leader of the European coalition against Napoleon, believed himself bound to support the Conservative cause against all the Revolutionists of Europe. After the death of Alexander the policy of Russia ceased to deserve the denunciations of English Liberals."

Then, carrying the war into the enemy's camp, Madame Novikoff continued :—

"Look at the great movements of one century, and ask whether it was England or Russia that furthered most the policy which in the opinion of English Liberals to-day was most in harmony with the development of Liberty and the progress of Civilisation.

"The Liberation of Italy, the Unification of Germany, the Transformation of Austria, and the Emancipation of the East all owed more to Russia than to England."

She concluded by the following remarkable survey of the Continental policy of Russia :—

"I will first take our offences against Liberal ideas.

"In 1819, at the Congress of Laybach, Alexander I., with the sympathy of the English Government, supported a Conservative policy in Germany.

"In 1821, at the Congress of Verona, Alexander I., with the sympathy of the English Government, supported a Conservative policy at Naples.

"In 1823 Russia supported French intervention in Spain against the opposition of the English Government.

"In 1846, allied to Austria, Russia annexed to Austria the Republic of Cracow against the protest of England.

"There was another instance about this time when Russian and English policy was in opposition : Lord Palmerston treated Greece in the Pacifico business with a high-handed violence which led the Russian Government to protest strongly against his conduct. Mr. Gladstone, however, cannot refer to this as an instance in which Russia upheld the cause of arbitrary power against the liberty and independence of nations, because he was the most eloquent

defender of the principles which Count Nesselrode invoked in his protest against the policy of Lord Palmerston ; and with Mr. Gladstone went the majority in the House of Lords and a considerable number of the most eminent Liberals in the House of Commons.

"In 1849 Russia assisted Austria in suppressing the Magyar rebellion, with the approval of most English Conservatives.

"In 1853 Russia attacked Turkey, and was attacked by England on account of the principle of an exclusive protectorate, which, by the Anglo-Turkish Convention, England has now adopted as her own.

"In 1871 Russia, with the sanction of all Europe, repealed the Black Sea Clause of the Treaty of Paris—a reform which had been proposed by Austria four years before.

"In 1878 Russia, with the sanction of the English Government, restored Bessarabia, which had been taken away after the Crimean War.

"Now, on the other hand, let me put down the instances in which our policy commended itself to the views of Liberal England :—

"At the beginning of this century, Russia, allied with England, rescued the liberties and independence of Europe from the ascendancy of Napoleon.

"In 1826 Russia freed Servia, England standing neutral.

"In 1829 Russia, assisted only at first by England, achieved the independence of Greece.

"In 1831 Russia co-operated with England in establishing the kingdom of Belgium.

"In 1833 Russia co-operated with England to prevent the destruction of the Ottoman Empire by Mehemet Ali.

"In 1840 Russia again united with England to save Turkey from disruption by France and Egypt.

"In 1850 Russia, in concert with England, compelled Germany to evacuate Schleswig-Holstein.

"In 1851 Russia saved Belgium from Napoleon the Third, with the hearty approval of the English Government.

"In 1859 Russia, opposed by England, supported the French liberation of Italy.

"In 1860 Russia, supported by England, approved of the French occupation of the Lebanon.

"In 1866 Russia supported Prussia in the Prusso-Italian war with Austria—England being neutral—which began German unity, completed the unity of Italy, and resulted in the freedom of Hungary.

"In 1867 Russia, in concert with England, secured the evacuation by the Turks of the Servian fortresses.

"In 1868 Russia, opposed by England, supported the Cretan insurrection (unfortunately, not perseveringly enough).

"In 1870 Russia—England being neutral—supported Germany by neutralising Austria, and thus secured the completion of German unity and the overthrow of the French Empire.

"In 1875 Russia, in concert with England, prevented a German attack on France.

"In 1877 Russia, opposed by England, secured the liberation of Bulgaria, the tutelage of Turkey, and the complete independence of Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania.

"The Concert between the two Governments is significant. Can you, then, wonder at our doubting the sanity of those who systematically speak as if the effacement of Russia from the political map and the

elimination of Russia from the balance of power ought to be the chief ends of English diplomacy? The State that took the leading share in freeing Europe from the yoke of Napoleon and in the emancipation of the East from the yoke of the Turk, and that has successfully exerted her influence to secure the preservation of Belgium, the liberation of Italy, the unity of Germany, and the transformation of Austria, is not one whose presence can be spared from the Council table of Europe without loss to the cause of Liberty, Nationality, and Justice."

M. de Laveleye wrote to Madame Novikoff after reading the foregoing vindication of the European policy of Russia :—

"DEAR MADAME,—Allow me to add two words in support of your thesis that Russia has often in Europe defended the cause of liberty.

"You admit a fault which does not exist, and you forget a liberal deed which Prince Metternich's Memoirs, newly published, bring into full relief.

"Russia, it is true, has not approved the Revolution of 1830, and in this she was perfectly right. The union of Belgium with Holland was the best thing done by the Treaty of Vienna. It was the re-establishment of the Netherlands of the sixteenth century, an historical formation, based upon palpable geographical conveniences. Holland contributed her commerce and her colonies; Belgium brought industry and agriculture.

"The United Netherlands formed an element of European stability, because it was too large a morsel to be swallowed either by Germany or by France.

"Since 1830 Belgium has never ceased trembling

for her existence. That, at least, is certain. The Revolution of 1830 was principally got up by the priests against a Protestant king, and the most far-seeing amongst the Liberals were all *Orangistes*, and regretted the separation from Holland.

"Russia, in her opposition, defended therefore the cause of Liberalism and that of the true equilibrium. Is it not evident that our position would be infinitely stronger had we remained united to Holland, and shared in her commerce and her colonies? We are now making strenuous endeavours to repair the mistake of 1830 by the establishment of a Customs Union.

"Thus the fault you admit in the Liberal past of Russia does not exist: just the opposite. France supported our Revolution, hoping to annex us, and England being jealous of the commerce of Holland.

"Here is your omission. Metternich relates with indignation that in 1814 the Emperor Alexander, instead of restoring the Bourbons, desired that there should be convoked an Assembly empowered freely to choose the form of government most convenient to France. He foresaw that the Restoration could not last. Metternich does not say what is well known, that the Emperor Alexander would even have accepted a Republic.

"Did he not prove his foresight as well as his devotion to the cause of progress and liberty?

"And your present Emperor, has he not deserved well of Humanity in abolishing serfdom and in liberating the populations subjected to the detestable Turkish rule?

"What is needed now is not a Parliament, but a Sovereign, inspired by the democratic traditions of Slavism.

"But this subject would lead me too far; I close it in remaining yours truly,

"ÉMILE DE LAVELEYE.

"LIÈGE, *December* 28, 1879."

Mr. Gladstone, writing in the *Nineteenth Century* for March 1880, practically admitted that Madame Novikoff had made out her case, contenting himself with her admission that whenever Russia had acted against freedom she had received the hearty support of the English Tories—as, for instance, when they approved of Russia's intervention on behalf of Austria against Hungary.

Madame Novikoff never hesitated to speak her mind with freedom even when it was Mr. Gladstone who drew her fire. Nor did Mr. Gladstone ever complain of the friendly remonstrances of his friend. On the contrary, he made haste to profit by them. For instance, in January 1880 Madame Novikoff published in a footnote to one of the chapters in *Russia and England* the following pointed remark :—

"I cannot understand how it is that Englishmen—even Liberal Englishmen—should so strangely ignore the fact that Eastern Roumelia, so far from being co-extensive with Southern Bulgaria, does not include one-half the Bulgarian lands south of the Balkan. In 1876 Mr. Gladstone wrote :—

"'If it be allowable that the executive power of Turkey should renew at this great crisis, by permission or authority of Europe, the Charter of its existence in Bulgaria, then there is not on record, since the beginning of political economy, a protest that man has lodged against intolerable misgovernment, or a stroke he has dealt at loathsome tyranny,

that ought not henceforward to be branded as a crime.' In 1878, the Turkish Charter of absolute authority in South-Western Bulgaria, annulled by Russia at San Stefano, was deliberately restored by Europe at Berlin, but against this outrage has even Mr. Gladstone so much as uttered a protest ? " [1]

The very next time Mr. Gladstone addressed a public meeting he made haste to repair the omission pointed out by Madame Novikoff. Addressing the electors of Midlothian in Edinburgh on March 17, 1880, Mr. Gladstone said :—

" What did the vote of six millions achieve for Turkey ? I will tell you what it achieved. It did achieve one result. It undoubtedly cut down largely the definition of Bulgaria established by the Treaty of San Stefano. The effect of so cutting it down is perfectly well known. It was that it put back under the direct rule of the Sultan of Turkey, and in the exact condition in which all European Turkey excepting the Principalities had been before the war, a population inhabiting the country of Macedonia of about a million people, the vast majority of them Christians. I believe a million and a half of people inhabiting Macedonia, to whom free institutions had been promised by the Treaty of San Stefano, are now again placed under the Turkish Pashas, and have not

[1] For the services rendered by her to the Slavonic Cause, O. K. received a large gold medal from the Bulgarian Government, and the high Order of St. Sebba. But she obstinately declared that they were given to her, not for her own work, but in memory of her brother. However, at Moscow, at a very numerous meeting of the monarchical party, when the President presented her with a Badge of Honour, she had to admit that the distinction was due to her personally.

She also possesses the Russian Red Cross.

Photograph by Elliott & Fry.]

THOMAS CARLYLE.

received one grain of benefit to improve their condition as compared with what it was before the war." [1]

Here we must retrace our steps for a little and string together the references to Mr. Carlyle's failing health to be found in Mr. Froude's letters to Madame Novikoff :—

"*June* 22, 1878.—Carlyle is well, to appearances, but he is growing very weak. His interest in this life is fast waning, and his eyes are straining into the 'beyond.' And what is that? Are we to begin again the round of passion and struggle and hope and glimpses of happiness and in the end weariness and disappointment? And is this to be called eternal peace? Give us sleep rather, never more to wake, and above all never to *dream*."

"*Sept.* 10, 1879.—Carlyle is well, and as devoted as ever to his omnibus drives. I must return to *duty* with him in the middle of October, and from that time till next summer, if I live so long, I shall be in my old place in Onslow Gardens. There we shall soon see you. Adieu."

The sadness of the approaching end of Mr. Carlyle was broken to Madame Novikoff as follows :—

"*Jan.* 30, 1881.—Now for news which will fall heavily on you, though you will not be surprised. Carlyle is dying. He sank when the frost set in, and has never rallied. He lies in his bed, never moving, scarcely speaking, taking no food, and quietly waiting for the end. Several times he has fallen into a state of unconsciousness from which he was not expected to recover. He may linger for many days yet, but I

[1] *Midlothian Speeches*, 2nd Series, p. 43.

shall never hear his voice again. I have not seen him myself for ten days. He then did not rouse himself to speak to me, though he knew that I was in the room. There will be an agitation for his burial in Westminster Abbey, but his orders on that point have been strict. He is to be 'gathered to his fathers' in Ecclefechan Kirkyard. He lived without any public mark of honour from his countrymen, and they shall not make a Pageant of his death.

"Soon after he is gone, I shall publish two small volumes of Autobiographical Reminiscences which he has left behind in my charge. I will send you a copy of them. They deal with 'times,' and 'things,' and 'persons' of which the Continent of Europe knows little, and they will scarcely bear translating. But we shall see. The Americans, I expect, will be passionately interested."

Carlyle died February 4, 1881.

CHAPTER VI.

1880–1885.

AFTER the Liberal victory which administered the *coup de grâce* to the Beaconsfieldian pro-Turkish policy in the East, Madame Novikoff rested on her laurels. There was no occasion for the display of the restless energy which had characterised her activity in the four years that followed her brother's death.

In the first year of the Gladstone administration all went merry as a marriage bell. In the second, the Irish question distracted Mr. Gladstone's attention from Eastern Europe. When Madame Novikoff returned to England in 1881 she wrote to Mr. Gladstone—with her customary packet of Russian tea for Mrs. Gladstone—mentioning that two distinguished diplomatists had been speaking very warmly of his efforts to maintain the Concert of Europe. Mr. Gladstone replied as follows :—

"*November* 2, 1881.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—Your very kind letter of the 25th underwent some delay in reaching my hands, from changes of place which I chanced to make. Let me thank you for it sincerely. I will not now answer it at any length, for I hope to come up for a short stay in town on Tuesday, and then to find an opportunity of calling on you rather late in some afternoon when it is your wont to be at home.

"I feel very thankful to the two distinguished Diplomatists whom you name for their too favourable appreciation of me and any efforts I have made. One thing I can say with comfort as my day of retirement draws nigh, for Lord Granville not less than for myself, this, namely, that, besides having stopped up some special sources of possible ill-will, we have said nothing and done nothing with a merely selfish aim or in a spirit unfriendly to any person or country. There is no merit, however, in this, for it is the happy accident of our position that opens for us this smooth and broad road: there is only very great demerit in acting otherwise.

"And you too, I must say, are entitled to enjoy a great consolation in reflecting that in those critical days between Russia and England you laboured boldly and ably at once for your own country and for the general cause of peace and international goodwill. How kind of you to send us tea, which I hope to taste with admiration in a few days.—Believe me sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Encouraged by this cordial expression of confidence, Madame Novikoff a week or two later wrote to Mr. Gladstone saying that she had written an article which she would be grateful if he would allow her to send him in proof. But Mr. Gladstone drew the line there. He replied, November 25, 1881:—

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—No, I must not read you in proof, nor in any way advise as to your sentiments or mode of expressing them: first, because you do not need it; and secondly, because my being your censor of the press would do you no good, as it would detract from the independence of your utterances, and it would place you in a false position, since

it is not my practice or my business to inspire any foreign organ. This without the smallest deduction from the acknowledgment I have already made and am at any time free to repeat as to the benefit derived from your free but kindly writings.

"I do not think every Russian is as prudent as yourself about Afghanistan—it surprised me to hear, at any rate, of one who blamed us for retiring from that country—a sentiment which I think you will not share.

"I send you herewith a copy of my speeches at Leeds, and I remain sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Gladstone suffered a slight accident at the beginning of 1881. The reports of his indisposition which reached Russia alarmed Madame Novikoff. She telegraphed for information. On February 27 she wrote me :—

"Got a telegram from Gladstone : 'Excellent sleep, no bad symptoms, wound healing.' Thank God if he is not in danger. Gladstone is the greatest and most generous man on earth!"

Mr. Gladstone speedily recovered; but the same month of February was fatal to two of Madame Novikoff's staunchest friends—Thomas Carlyle and Theodor Dostoeffsky. For the death of the former she was not unprepared. She wrote me on February 2, 1881 :—

"I am afraid poor dear, beloved Carlyle is actually dying! The last time I saw him he was so very kind and affectionate to me, but said, 'Ay, ay, when you come back here you will not find me alive.' That last meeting, I confess, upset me fearfully, and

were I less ashamed of having any feeling at all I might have sobbed in his presence (which I did not, I am glad to say)."

Mr. Froude thus reported the burial of Carlyle on February 20 :—

" I am so occupied and so worried with the business which has fallen on me since Carlyle's death that I have had no time for letters, no spirits to write ' amusing letters ' such as you demand of me. He is *gone*—the greatest man that we have had among us in my life-time. I saw him laid in the earth in the Kirkyard of his native village. Tyndall, I, and Lecky stood by the grave while the earth was shovelled in upon him. There he rests by the side of his mother, whom he loved better than any other person in the world. I can say no more about it at present. When the air has grown clear again you shall have more.

" Politics are dwindled by this great catastrophe to their own miserable littleness. I care now nothing about them."

Madame Novikoff wrote me as follows when the end came :—

" Moscow, *February* 14/26, 1881.

" I cannot tell you how Carlyle's and Dostoeffsky's deaths upset me. Of course I well remember all that Carlyle repeatedly said to me this last autumn about his longing for death ; but I am an old egotist, and to think that I shall never see that dear face again, never, is terribly hard. Carlyle has at all events outlived himself, his work was over ; but Dostoeffsky !

" He was scarcely fifty. There is no man in Russia now whose influence was more telling and more useful. He was an enthusiastic Slavophile. In 1849, *having*

THEODOR DOSTOYEFFSKY.

taken his brother's fault (a very venial sin it was, after all; but Emperor Nicholas had been misled, and fancied that he was full of revolutionary plots), *my* Dostoeffsky, Theodor, was banished to Siberia for four years. Not strong in health already, that imprisonment gave him epileptic fits, but strengthened his mind and his soul more than ever. Dostoeffsky, to whom I once expressed my horror at that unnecessary torture, smiled and said, 'Oh, you are wrong. I do not complain. It has been a good and a grand school! It strengthened my faith and my love towards those who suffer and are patient. It also strengthened my love for Russia and the great, admirable qualities of the Russian character. Believe me,' added he, 'there is no real progress, no real civilisation, without the deep sympathy for our brethren, the real self-sacrifice which is chiefly found and seen in our countrymen. You can appeal to souls only through your own soul. You may help others only when you suffer with them, when you love them, when your Christian faith has penetrated every word you utter, every step you take.' Dostoeffsky was adored by all our youth as well as by grown-up people who had some sparks of truth and nobleness in their hearts. As for me, I lost in Dostoeffsky a great and very kind friend, and so has my brother, who is also deeply grieved by that bereavement."

The following month inflicted a still more terrible blow. On March 14 Alexander the Second was killed in the streets of St. Petersburg by the bombs of the Nihilists. Madame Novikoff, who had just published in *Fraser's Magazine* a long article describing "The Reforms of the Reign of Alexander II.," was prostrated by the news. She wrote me from Moscow :—

"It is a terrible, terrible blow. It made me quite ill for several days. I could neither write nor think. I only felt a dreadful pain everywhere. That martyr-death as the only reward for a whole life of generous kindness, self-sacrifice, compassion, and charity, it really upsets all notions of justice. Poor Emperor! Poor Russia! My only consolation is that I at least, I did all I could to serve his cause, and was not amongst those who forgot his services to my country.

"Many warm thanks for the admirable article in the *Pall Mall Gazette* about his assassination, and the kind reference to the *Frazer's Magazine*. Who could imagine that that poor little account would serve as an epitaph? I felt from here that you sympathised with us. Thank you from all my heart.

"The idea that my last O. K. was dedicated to the reforms of our dear Emperor is a serious consolation in my grief. My boy has been sent to St. Petersburg among the Deputation of the students to put a wreath upon the coffin. He has just returned. He is tremendously excited and monarchical. I never saw him so thoroughly devoted to the Imperial Family as he is now, and I do not think he would hesitate a moment to give his life, if needed, to serve their cause. The indignation of all the country is tremendous. The houses where the relatives of the culprits abide have to be guarded by the police: crowds of indignant people want to burn or destroy them! The Government and Loris Melikoff himself have been too lenient. All the present assassins had already been condemned and then again pardoned. It's mere folly to show a weakness of that kind! The 5/18th of March was fixed by the poor Emperor for announcing very large representative privileges to all classes. On the 1/13th he was murdered.

ALEXANDER II.
Emperor of Russia, 1855–1881.

Aksakoff, Katkoff, and we all at Moscow insist upon the absolute monarchy which alone can work well in Russia. Heaven save us from a *Constitution*."

M. Pobédonostzeff answered the prayer of the Muscovites. Loris Melikoff's Constitution was torn up, and Russia under Alexander III. embarked upon a policy of resolute government which lasted for twenty years. Madame Novikoff justified this decision as follows :—

"*March* 29, 1881.

"If a Constitution of the Western type should be now introduced, Russia, poor Russia, will be more wretched than ever. Aksakoff's speech pronounced at St. Petersburg was the best piece of eloquence ever delivered amongst us. Western Constitutionalism is so contrary to our views that it can only be recommended by Russia's bitter enemies. The Western forms have ruined Bulgaria, and in Russia everybody is convinced that those who pretend to be our good wishers recommend their rotten liberties only because it would be fatal to our country."

I note this vehement protest as one of the first indications of the fact that upon questions of the internal administration of Russia we were always more or less at feud, especially on the question of religious liberty. Imagine the difficulty of harmonising the views of English Nonconformists with the convictions expressed in such a declaration as the following, which embodies more or less crudely the views of many Russian Nationalists. They say,

"Rightly or wrongly, Orthodoxy is the Soul of Russia. The Emperor's enemies are trying their best to make him forget the oath which he swore at his coronation to be always the Protector of our Church,

and thus to induce him to create in Russia a regular religious earthquake, for which the majority of the people would never forgive him."

We are familiar with this Coronation oath argument, but since Mr. Gladstone disestablished the Irish Church we have not heard much of it in this country. As for the warning that Religious Equality would produce a regular religious earthquake in Russia, I am not sure that "a regular religious earthquake" is not just the very thing that Russia, and not Russia alone, stands most in need of just now.

In the midst of the troubles of Russia Madame Novikoff could still sympathise with the misfortunes which attended British policy in South Africa. After the series of defeats which culminated in Majuba Hill, Madame Novikoff wrote :—

" You will scarcely believe the feelings with which the bad tidings from your South African battlefields have been received here. I never expected to see such a deep, such a sincere sympathy, such a yearning for better news! All this change is due to Mr. Gladstone's wonderful prestige."

Mr. Froude's comments upon the South African policy of the Government showed less appreciation for this " wonderful prestige."

The first premonitory warning Madame Novikoff received from Mr. Froude as to troubles brewing in South Africa was written November 9, 1880 :—

" We have another struggle before us with the Colonial Office about the poor Basutos, etc. I who hate sentimentalism, and believe in Cromwell and the hard hand, am to head a deputation from the Aborigines Protection Society, and remonstrate against what is

going on. Gladstone, who is all tenderness to Bulgarians and Irish, is hard as stone about our 'black brothers.' If they were slaves they would be worth something, and would be taken care of at least as well as cows and horses. There is no slavery, we are proud to say, under the glorious British flag, but matters are not much mended if the blacks are to be shot like wolves. We are a nation of Tartuffes.

"The Devil mend us."

Mr. Froude thus reports the disaster of Majuba Hill, January 30, 1881:—

"My poor friend, Sir George Colley, has lost a battle in the Transvaal; many officers and men killed. It is his first independent command, and he has been defeated in his first action. The excuse for seizing the Transvaal was that the poor Dutchmen were unable to defend themselves against the natives. It seems that they can defend themselves against us to some purpose. But they will be beaten, poor fellows, and as they are very brave some thousands of them will be shot. All Europe will cry shame upon us. But what then?"

A month later, on February 20, Mr. Froude writes:—

"We are killing the poor Dutch in South Africa, you see, by way of saving our national honour. At present the killing is the other way. My friend Sir George Colley has not been equal to the occasion, and the Dutch have been killing us. But the contest between the great British Empire and a few thousand farmers is too unequal: we shall destroy a few hundreds, we shall have what the papers will call a decisive '*Victory*' (save the mark!). Every surviving Dutchman in South Africa will hate us for ever. All

nations upon the earth will say Shame upon us, and *we* shall go on contentedly as if nothing had happened, till the fire breaks out again. We shall lose the Cape Colony in a few years, and well we shall deserve to lose it. 'Constitutional Government' as usual."

Troubles thickened round Gladstone's Government, and in 1882 it was compelled, sorely against the wishes of its chief, to embark on the Egyptian Expedition.

On the day of the victory of Tel el Kebir, in Egypt, Madame Novikoff telegraphed in the morning :—

"Accept hearty congratulations on great victory."

Mr. Gladstone answered with the following letter on the same day :—

"*September* 15, 1882.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I write to thank you very sincerely for your kind congratulation on the success in Egypt. We and the whole country are in a state of rejoicing, and I hope of thankfulness to God Almighty, who has prospered us in what I feel and know to be an honest undertaking. Mindful perhaps of what occurred in 1878 after the heroic sacrifices and efforts of your great and difficult war, *some* in Russia have looked upon us with a jealous eye. Whether the England of 1882 desires to be so regarded by any, or whether we too have been labouring in the common interests of justice and of civilisation, a little time will show. It is pleasant to find that you do not wait to see us tested by this little term, but believe in us and congratulate us. We certainly ought to be in good humour, for we are pleased with our Army, our Navy, our Admirals, our Generals, and our organisation ! The soldiers were not so conducted in the days

of the Crimea. We have paid much since then to improve our little army : and, as it now appears, not without fruit. It is hardly more than seven weeks since we determined to send some 35,000 men to a distance of, say, 3000 miles, and it has pleased God to give a quick result. I thank you again for your kind words. Let me return them by words of a sincere condolence on the death of your heroic Skobeleff. Under the heavy pressure of my office and of the Session, I watched with a warm and cordial interest the sad tidings that concerned him. The departure of a hero from this world is for all mankind an object of our sympathy : he was a hero. May peace be with him ; and may your country have many more.—Yours sincerely, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Russia evacuated Bulgaria in less than three years after the signature of the Treaty of Peace. It is now (1909) twenty-seven years since the bombardment of the Forts of Alexandria, and we are still firmly established in Egypt.

At the close of that year Madame Novikoff sent Mr. Gladstone Palmer's book on the Eastern Church. She also sent him a Review containing an article on the work of Miklouhy Maclay in New Guinea. He replied on December 5 :—

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I return the Review. The article is most interesting, the *man* evidently still more so. With it I send a little book in which, if you like to read *Bishop Patterson* (who was one of the noblest growths of the English race in this nineteenth century), you will find matter touching the *aborigines* and the trade in labour miscalled free. In Mr. Maclay I am afraid we miss the Christian element which was

the life and soul of Patterson's heroism. However, there is a brotherhood between them.—Yours sincerely,

" W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Novikoff shortly afterwards, and in course of conversation, mentioned as a fact of which she thought Mr. Gladstone was cognisant that the Sultan had made overtures to Russia to occupy Constantinople, a statement for the accuracy of which she referred to Sir H. D. Wolff. Mr. Gladstone wrote on December 7 :—

" MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—Pray keep the book, and pray fulfil your promise. Nay further, tell me all about the Sultan, which you evidently think I know ; but I assure you we were not admitted along with Wolff to share the confidences on this interesting occasion.—Yours sincerely,

" W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Novikoff replied as follows in a letter dated Holloway's Hotel, 48 Dover Street, December 8 :—

" You startle me, my dear Mr. Gladstone. I cannot conceive why our diplomatists should be so cautious and reticent about a fact which, according to my humble judgment, certainly does not reflect any discredit on our Government. It is absurd on their part. What I know is this : when the bombardment of Alexandria became known at Constantinople, the Sultan became frightened at the possible results of the war and nervous about his own fate. The brilliant idea struck him that Russia was the only true friend he had, whose word could be trusted, and offers were made (I am told) to the effect that Russian troops should occupy Constantinople. The Russian Government—chiefly our Emperor—has a great regard

for you and confidence in all you said and did out as well as in office. Russia declined the Turkish offers. I am anything but sure that she would have done so if you had not been the chief representative of England.

"Sir Henry D. Wolff told me he knew all about these negotiations from his Constantinople correspondents."

It would but be in accordance with the fitness of things if it were true that Constantinople was saved from Russian occupation in 1882 because of the confidence established in the mind of the Russian Government by Mr. Gladstone's opposition to Lord Beaconsfield's policy of 1878, which had as its ostensible object the keeping of the Russians out of Constantinople.

Mr. Froude occasionally discussed the prospects of the near Eastern Question with Madame Novikoff. He wrote to her, March 10, 1882, as follows :—

"I am sorry you are so warlike. It is a bad sign. I don't know the exact nature of Austria's sins. I hate Austria, and think the worst of her. But I shall be sorry to see you at this moment throwing down the gauntlet to Austria, Germany, and Turkey (for you will have to fight all three), at a time when Gambetta is pushed aside, and France will sit still, and you will not have a friend in the world. I can understand how restless you are. Things cannot last in those Provinces in the state in which the Berlin Treaty left them. But the further Austria goes in those quarters the more she will be hated, and the weaker she will grow. Perhaps I know nothing about it, but if I were a Russian with my present information I should exert myself to put my own house in order,

and keep out of war till a better opportunity. You will let me hear from time to time how things are likely to go."

When Madame Novikoff's *Life of Skobeleff* was published, Mr. Froude wrote to her on June 2, 1883 :—

"I read *Skobeleff*, of course, and admired the skill with which you draw his portrait. You would have pleased the English people better if it had been all Skobeleff, for they do admire a hero and were particularly prepared to admire him. But they are still Jingoes at heart, and fancy that the Slavonic cause means trouble to them in India. They are fools, of course, but the fools here and everywhere are the majority, and 'the majority' is the new instrument of Divine infallibility. You have lost Skobeleff, but a country which could produce Skobeleff will have many more who only want the opportunity to win a name as he did."

Another echo of that old time is audible in Mr. Freeman's surly growl at the admission of the Earl of Derby into the Liberal Cabinet in 1882. He wrote to Madame Novikoff, December 24, 1882 :—

"Did Gladstone explain to you why he lets the wretched Derby into his Cabinet ? I suppose whenever Gladstone wants to do any good, Derby will step in to tell him to observe a prudent attitude, and to avoid complication, and above all to declare everything that's going to happen the day after to-morrow to lie beyond the range of practical politics. Derby instead of Argyll—and all thanks to the Irish !

"If you had come to Somerlease I should have had a good bit to tell you about America. They don't love Turks there, or Austrians either."

Mr. Gladstone having made a speech on Egyptian policy, which was as usual misinterpreted by the Tories, Madame Novikoff wrote in some disquietude for his explanation. He replied :—

"10 Downing Street, Whitehall,
August 8, 1883.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—Conservative members may not be safe interpreters of ministerial utterances. The leading feature of my declaration was that we had nothing to retract or alter in our former declarations. Eight or nine months ago we had near 35,000 men in Egypt; we have now, I believe, 6,000. I do not know if you are acquainted with an article of mine in the *Nineteenth Century*, four or five years ago, on Egypt. It would be hard for me to eat that article. Even had I an appetite, I should have no digestion for it. This reminds me of a quotation of Lady Holland's from an Italian friend: 'Il mangiare, il mangiare si, quest' è facile ma il digerire, il diguise, quest' è il principale!' The latent Jingoism still cherished by a portion of the country without doubt desires us to keep Egypt, and feeds itself with idle hopes, the value of which I hope in no long time they will be able to estimate more soundly than they can now do.—Wishing you a good journey, I remain sincerely yours,

"W. E. Gladstone."

The hopes of Jingoism do not seem so idle to us in 1909 as they did in 1883 to Mr. Gladstone.

The year 1884 was one in which the troubles arising from the abandonment of the Soudan first brought me into strained relations with Mr. Gladstone.

The following letters relate to that episode :—

"*June* 12, 1884.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—Will you kindly breakfast here on Thursday *next* at ten o'clock. I am probably angry about Stead, but less angry than sorry. I do not forget his services to the cause of right.—Yours sincerely, W. E. GLADSTONE."

The sorrow and anger were reciprocal. I had been for months imploring Mr. Gladstone either to give General Gordon a free hand or to relieve him. It is now clear that the culprit was not Mr. Gladstone but Lord Cromer, upon whose shoulders rests almost undivided the burden of responsibility for General Gordon's fate. But in those days the extent to which Mr. Gladstone had been baffled by the sluggishness and obstinacy of our Resident at Cairo was hidden from the public. Mr. Gladstone was officially responsible, and I have only one thing to regret about the vehemence with which I pressed the Government not to ruin General Gordon by tying his hands, and that is that I was not much more vehement.

It was in this year of 1884 that Madame Novikoff made a curious foray without precedent and without premeditation into Egyptian politics. Russia's attitude as to Egypt has always been characterised by a prudent reserve. Since Nicholas I. told Sir Hamilton Seymour that he was prepared to recognise British ascendancy in Egypt—in return for an equivalent in the Balkans—Russia has been one of the Powers which troubled England the least in the Nile Valley. Madame Novikoff, following the traditional policy of her country, had said nothing about Egypt in her book *Russia and England*. But in the early eighties the temptation was too strong to be resisted. The parallel between Russia's libera-

tion of Bulgaria and Britain's conquest of Egypt was as obvious as the contrast between the motive of the two interventions was glaring. The *tu quoque*, ever the favourite controversial weapon of Madame Novikoff, lent itself with almost fatal facility to the discussion of the Egyptian Expedition. In a brief series of articles contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in the early months of 1885, under the title of "The Russianisation of England," Madame Novikoff contrasted very effectively British theory and British practice in the evolution of the Egyptian intervention, which began with the deposition of Ismail and which resulted in the virtual appropriation of the north-east corner of Africa by the British.

If the Egyptian Expedition had been ordered by any British statesman other than Mr. Gladstone, Madame Novikoff would probably have been much more free in her comments.

The fiction was zealously kept up that we had no intention of remaining in Egypt. We had gone there to restore order; we were resolutely determined to clear out when order was re-established. "Egypt for the Egyptians" was our motto, and it was regarded as almost high treason to suggest that our occupation was other than temporary. The troubles in the Soudan which culminated in the sack of Khartoum, the death of General Gordon, and the partial depopulation of the whole of the Egyptian Soudan, made Egypt the question of the day from 1882 to 1885.

In 1884 Madame Novikoff found herself one evening at a dinner-party in Grosvenor Street. After dinner Mr. Smart, one of the guests, addressed her as follows :—

"Madame Novikoff, you who take up the cause of

the injured and oppressed, why do you never say a word for Ismail Pasha? There is no man who has been the victim of such cruel injustice as he."

So saying, Mr. Smart presented to Madame Novikoff the famous ex-Khedive, who also was one of the party. Ismail asked permission to call upon her, and he was soon seated in her salon pouring the tale of his woes into her sympathetic ear. The net result was that Madame Novikoff wrote a series of articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette* setting forth the best case that could be made for his restoration.

"I hear," said Mr. Smart, "that the Anti-Slavery Society propose to erect a monument to General Gordon for his services in suppressing the Slave Trade; but it is to Ismail Pasha, who employed Gordon, that such an honour is justly due."

Madame Novikoff found little difficulty in making out a good case for Ismail. Just at that time the name of Gordon was one to conjure with, and Gordon, just before he departed for Khartoum, had expressed himself strongly in favour of restoring his former patron.

In an article entitled "A Last Word for Ismail Pasha, on behalf of Madame Novikoff," which appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on February 12, 1885, Mr. Smart said:—

"The moment, perhaps, is not inopportune, when all are lamenting the fate of General Gordon and paying homage to his genius, that the public should be reminded that the restoration of Ismail Pasha was the measure which that distinguished and heroic Englishman always insisted upon as the very best that could be taken to restore the prosperity of Egypt and to give peace to the Soudan. 'Hold on to Khar-

ISMAIL PASHA.
Viceroy of Egypt, 1867–1879.

toum as long as you can, and give Nubar a free hand,' he said at Southampton to your representative. 'That is the best thing you can do, unless, of course, it is possible to send back the old Khedive. I would do anything to help that old bird,' he added, in his familiar way. 'I would have Ismail back, indeed I would; he is ten million times better than Tewfik. The people are far worse off now than they were under Ismail. Ismail is one of the ablest men of his time, and by no means the devil some believe him to be. He is the worst-used man in Europe. I can't bear to see a man kicked like Ismail—a man I esteem it the greatest pleasure to have had the honour of serving.'

"Why not follow General Gordon's advice in this as in other matters? He knew Ismail, and Ismail knew him. 'When I am with Chinese Gordon,' said the ex-Khedive, 'I feel that I am in the presence of a superior'—a loyal homage seldom paid by a Sovereign to one of his servants. In the Soudan Ismail at least gave General Gordon a free hand, showing both more confidence in our Christian hero and more sound common sense than the English Government."

In this Last Word she lamented that there was no one to say a word for the poor Khedive but herself. It was a forlorn hope from the first, interesting only as illustrating the quixotism of her nature and as recalling the controversies of that epoch, now almost inconceivably remote, when it was still possible to discuss seriously the possibility of England fulfilling her pledges in Egypt. Madame Novikoff began her first article, May 13, 1884, by asking :—

"How did England's troubles in Egypt begin? Because Lord Beaconsfield's Government dethroned

Ismail Pasha. There is talk about this control and that control, but while Ismail reigned in Cairo there was at least peace and order in that country. . . . If you really mean Egypt for the Egyptians, restore Ismail Pasha. Any other solution is only a decorous disguise of Egypt for the English, Egypt for the French, or Egypt for Europe.

"'What! Pharaoh!' exclaimed one of my friends indignantly. And why not? I should like to know. A Pharaoh is at least a more natural personage on the Nile than a British Resident playing the part of prompter to an ignorant prince. 'But Ismail the Tyrant!' Well, I am not going to dispute about his value. Pashas are seldom angels, and I do not think revolutions are crushed with sweet lullabies. But, after all, is there any tyranny so oppressive, so intolerable as anarchy?"

And so forth, and so forth. Again and again Madame Novikoff returns to the old refrain:—

"Restore Ismail Pasha, and protect Egypt from foreign invasion by a united European guarantee similar to that which secured the freedom and independence of Belgium in 1830. This may be a bad solution, if you please; but there is no good solution, and this seems to be not only the most logical, but the least bad of all that have yet been suggested."

Questioned a few months later why she was so enthusiastic about Ismail Pasha, she replied:—

"I spoke of Ismail Pasha as of a man who had a strong will and a thorough knowledge of the country, and being a very intelligent Mohammedan, could regain a moral hold over the Egyptians. His restoration would abolish the Mahdi's present monopoly

of religious prestige in the eyes of the Egyptians. The reign of bondholders was not my ideal. . . ."

It was all in vain. If Ismail had been the Angel Gabriel her plea would have fallen on deaf ears. Ismail's star had set. Never again was he to set foot in Cairo. Lured by glozing promises to Constantinople, he found himself a prisoner. In his gilded cage on the Bosphorus Gordon's "Old Bird" remained until his death.

One of Madame Novikoff's minor pleasures was to keep Mr. Gladstone supplied with foreign books, and Mrs. Gladstone with Russian tea. On her return to London in 1885 she sent Mr. Gladstone another of the works of Mr. Le Play. Mr. Gladstone acknowledged it as follows :—

"*September* 20, 1885.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—You have again favoured me by sending a work which promises to be of much interest. It is most kind.

"When I received the former one, I was somewhat alarmed at the four well-filled volumes. But I have now read them, and am in the fourth, which, for a slow reader like me, is a good deal. . . . And this statement is the fullest proof I can give of my high appreciation of this important book. There are drawbacks to it. He is not a Liberal—that is, he does not set a real value on Liberty. He is tongue-tied about Napoleonism. And lastly, he is also tongue-tied about Ultramontanism. Nevertheless, in what I take to be most fundamental, I am in close harmony with him, as I doubt not you are. I am for old customs and traditions against needless change. I am for the individual as against the State. I am for the family and the stable family as against the State. Finally, I look on all

destroyers or underminers of the old Christian faith as being in act, whatever they may be in intention, the worst enemies of their kind.

"You kindly ask about my voice. Plenty of medical handling and physic has been administered for two months, also change of air and rest. The result is that I am hopeful of being able to do a minimum of work with it, especially as I am to keep very quiet until the Election comes in November.

"I have looked among my papers to find a spare copy of the article you name, but I am sorry to say in vain. If you have the date, I might find it in an old *Nineteenth Century*. 'Gleanings' do not include tracts of political controversy. The explanations about Zulficar were not, as far as my memory serves, given before we quitted office.[1]

"I send copy of an address in which I mournfully surrender my hopes of immediate retirement. It *cannot* be very long delayed. There are also two versions of Hymns which in the original are remarkable. —Believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

On the 18th of September 1885 the first great blow was dealt to the handiwork of Lord Beaconsfield at the Congress of Berlin. On that day the people of Eastern Roumelia—the name given to Bulgaria south of the Balkans—rose in rebellion, seized the Governor-General, and declared their union with the principality of Bulgaria. On September 22 Prince Alexander made his triumphal entry into Philippopolis, and notified the signatory Powers of the fait accompli. Russia, then under Alexander III., a man passionate for peace and resolute to maintain the authority of

[1] See next chapter.

the Berlin Treaty, was more opposed to the coup d'état than any other Power. Lord Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister, was the first to declare against any armed intervention in Eastern Roumelia. The Sultan bore the change heroically. The Ambassadors of the Great Powers, after meeting three times at Constantinople, solemnly condemned and disavowed the violation of the Treaty of Berlin by Bulgaria ; but as they at the same time complimented the Turks for not resenting the breach of the Treaty by force of arms, the union of Eastern Roumelia and Bulgaria became an accomplished fact. Servia resented the aggrandisement of her neighbour, and on November 14 King Milan declared war on Bulgaria. The Bulgarians administered to the invading Servians a well-deserved beating, and on November 30 hostilities ceased.

Madame Novikoff contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* an article entitled "The True Truth about the Balkan States," and sent a copy of it to Mr. Gladstone, who was back at Hawarden after having fought and won another Midlothian Campaign. He replied, December 5 :—

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I am afraid I must not enter on the subject of the article you are kind enough to enclose. I have nothing to do with Imperial negotiations : Peace, and then Liberty, are my watchwords. Nor is this the first occasion during the present year in which I have felt that silence towards you was the only course for me to adopt. You will see, of course, that I allude to Zulficar, in its earlier stage ; for I am heartily glad that when Lord Salisbury came in the difficulties appeared to vanish. But this rather surly preface

does not prevent me from cordially thanking you for your friendly congratulations.—Believe me most faithfully yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Gladstone was much too absorbed in the Irish Question to have time or attention to spare for the quarrels of the petty principalities of the Balkan.

When rumours gained ground as to Mr. Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule, Madame Novikoff wrote anxiously to Mr. Kinglake to ask if the Liberal Prime Minister had actually been in contact with Mr. Parnell. Mr. Kinglake replied:—

"In answer to your question, I cannot believe that Gladstone has put himself in communication with Mr. Parnell; but, unfortunately, he can do an immensity of mischief without actually resorting to a vulgar treachery of that sort."

In 1886 Madame Novikoff's pen was as active as ever. Among the list of articles which she contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of that year I find the following:—

Feb. 2. "The Polish Policy of Prince Bismarck."
July 13. "On Government by Journalism."
Sept. 28. "On an Anglo-Russian Alliance."

But that which chiefly excited her interest was the sudden turn of events in Bulgaria. According to Lord Salisbury's speech on the 9th November, "A midnight conspiracy in which officers of the Prince, debauched by foreign gold, had turned against the ruler who had trusted them, and hurled him from the throne."

On August 21 Prince Alexander was suddenly deposed by his own army. On September 8 he

abdicated. Russia was accused of having engineered the revolution. And Madame Novikoff was as usual to the front in defence of her country. She wrote on Bulgarian affairs in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on September 8, November 15, December 14, and was twice interviewed on the subject, November 10 and December 29.

Mr. Froude wrote to her on September 10, 1886 :—

"You reappear now like the stormy petrel. You will find yourself in an unamiable world—the anger will be the greater because (I think) it will be impotent. For myself, I remain where I was. Your friend Freeman has thrown the Russians over. He says he was for them when they were doing well. He is against them now, etc. I have always looked on Prince Alexander as a puppet of English diplomacy, a destined victim who has collapsed even sooner than I expected; my *fear* was that you may pull our noses a little too hard. There will be spirit enough in us to resent it, and perhaps to get into war with you. We have been so demoralised by fifty years of cant and Parliamentary palaver and progress, that we shall make a bad hand of it, and then it may be that this poor old Lion will wake up in earnest, and there may be a bad time before us.

"Gladstone has fulfilled Carlyle's prophecy. He has led us into a mess from which we shall not escape with unscratched skins. If the Tories had kept to their old lines, and the old Russian alliance, as the Duke of Wellington wished, I suppose by this time it would have been all the same, for then Gladstone would have gone in for Liberty against Despotism, etc., and the Tsar would have been the great Devil whom it was his mission to make an end of.

"I conclude that you will be at Constantinople before a year is out. I have expected it ever since the Crimean War, and therefore shall not be surprised.

"I am doing nothing; living on the spent force of *Oceana*, which has been unexpectedly popular—so popular that I think I shall burn my pens and not risk the favour which I seem to have gained by another venture. Least of all am I inclined to say anything more about Politics. 'Let the dead bury their dead.' The Irish bubble is bursting. The Home Rulers are curs without heart to strike a blow, except with a dagger in the dark. If we had the courage to give them their deserts we should hang five hundred of them in chains and leave them to feed the crows. Gladstone I believe to be done, one thing only can restore him. If Lord Salisbury gets into a war with you, either at the Bosphorus or in Afghanistan, and gets a beating—as is not impossible—*then* we should see changes on the scale of the French Revolution. But this I think will hardly be. Let me hear how you are and what you are about. If you are going to try what you can do with the English Press, I don't envy you. You will find it a harder task than you have found it yet. Stead may be faithful yet, but he will do you more harm than good. Perhaps you have come with easier intentions, to look on and amuse yourself. That will be best. Or, best of all, you have possibly reverted to your original mission as a minister of the Churches? and will bring out a book on the Double Procession. Tell me, anyway, how it is to be, and believe me . . ."

In his next letter, October 1, 1886, Mr. Froude was still ill at ease. He wrote :—

"Your article on the Bulgarian crisis is a very good one, I think; *i.e.* it says all that I believe myself and have long believed—and says it in an excellent way. I cannot conjecture what effect it will produce, or whether any effect. Lord Salisbury has the management of things in his hands. If he can bring about a great European coalition against Russia he will. He will calculate, as many an English statesman has done, that English people in their hearts delight in war, are immeasurably vain of military glory, and that a war in which we might have some success will serve better than anything to make the Government popular and draw off the attention of the multitude from internal politics. He will not be mad enough to go into the business single-handed, but intrigue may do a good deal; and politicians are always the stupidest and blindest part of the community. For my part, I am sick of it. I incline to read nothing and do nothing, and fit myself (as at my age I should do) for 'another and a better world.'"

Mr. Gladstone wrote to her on this subject as follows:—

"HAWARDEN, *November* 16, 1886.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I am always glad that your remarkable talent and ingenuity should be employed in setting the Bulgarian case fully before my countrymen. It is a great English want, and I will say for them that I think they, except extreme partisans, are not sorry to have it supplied.

"I will neither defend nor attack Lord Salisbury while you belabour him to your heart's content. I never have (meaningly) attacked anybody—except for a sufficient practical purpose. You seem to be

the only person who can manage Mr. Stead. But his paper is very cleverly written. Now let me frankly say, I do not see that your criticisms touch me. But it is not a bad thing, probably, that I should be held up to view as too anti-Russian; and there is little doubt that within a restricted sphere Jingoism is awake and alive amongst us. Jingoism fighting for liberty will be a quaint sight.

"Your cheerful good-humour in the midst of controversy is always good and edifying to witness.

"I am thankful to say that my mind and time are now in a small degree given to literature. Good-bye. I must not omit to thank you for kind words about Mrs. Drew. Thank God she is now making rapid progress, but has still much to make.—Sincerely yours,

"W. E. G."

Before two years were over Madame Novikoff was deploring that she also found me awkward to manage.

Mr. Gladstone's remark was probably prompted by a rueful remembrance of the way the *Pall Mall Gazette* had opposed his first scheme for making Ireland a taxed Republic, by excluding the Irish members from the House of Commons.

The affairs in Bulgaria followed a somewhat puzzling course.

Madame Novikoff wrote Mr. Gladstone on the subject. He replied, January 4, 1887 :—

"Dear Madame Novikoff,—I am afraid I am not well able to follow you into the particulars of the Memorandum from Bulgarian Refugees, but I hope their case will be fully considered, and justice done to them.

"I do not understand what is going on. Russia had great and true glory in setting Bulgaria free. I should be glad to see her a guardian of the freedom which she gave. When Prince Alexander at the beginning of his reign seemed to be manœuvring against his people, Russia did not appear to be discountenancing him. At *this* time I do not understand that he has done anything against his people, and Russia does not appear to countenance him. All this puzzles and pains me. I do not understand it, and it is entirely beyond my power to make the requisite examination. In that you must find me a provoking correspondent.—Sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Two days later Mr. Gladstone wrote to her from Singleton, Swansea, whither he had gone on a Home Rule Campaign:—

"*January* 6, 1887.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I have received your letter when in the midst of a political campaign in South Wales. I saw 60,000 people on Saturday, of whom 40,000 not only gave up their day's wages but paid for railway tickets, and I have seen a somewhat smaller number to-day. All these, 98/100 of whom are strong Protestants, made this demonstration in order to secure, firstly and mainly, justice for Roman Catholic Ireland. It is not, after all, a bad country in which such things can take place.

"I have not followed the proceedings of the *P.M.G.*, for I have been too much occupied with other absorbing matters. I consider you in the main responsible for Mr. Stead, because I think you are the only person who exercises any power over him.

"I have always rejoiced in your plain-speaking as a Russian, that quality of an Englishman. I hope I

shall not lose. And I am much grieved and annoyed if Stead has in any way intercepted or impaired it.

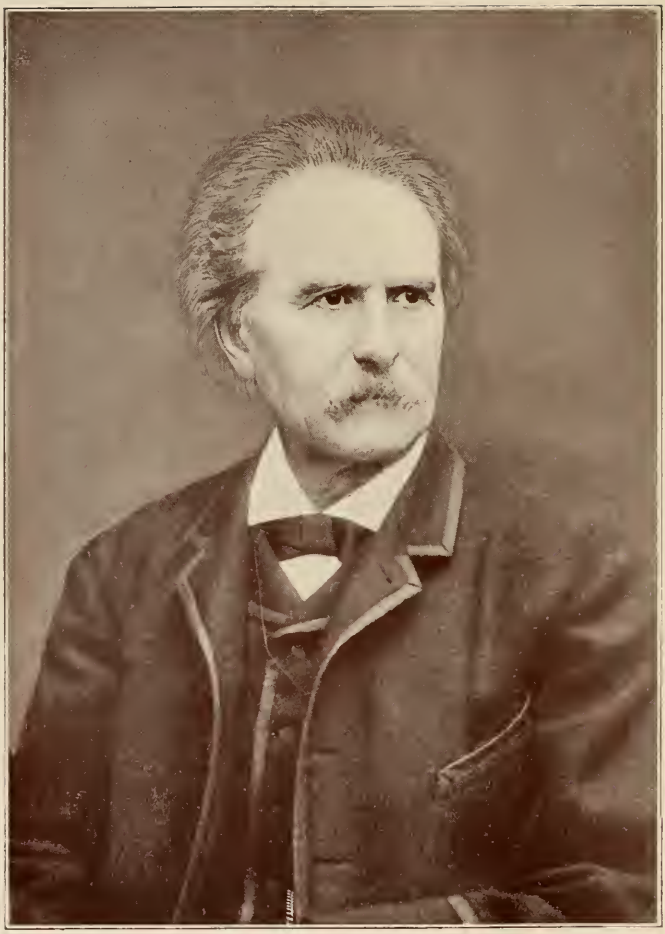
"As to the Afghans, I think they are just as good people to deal with as most civilised communities. They have suffered much more, at any rate, from us than they have done to us. I hope and pray you will never use them ill under the influence of your military party, which is probably as bad as ours.

"God bless both our countries.—Sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"I do not know Ridgway personally, and my memory gets weak. But my recollections of him are very good."

In what way that unfortunate Stead had "impaired or intercepted" the plain-speaking of "the only person who exercised any power" over him I am, after twenty years, quite unable to recall. But, speaking without any remembrance of what offence had been alleged against me, the two propositions hardly seem compatible the one with the other.



ÉMILE DE LAVELEYE.

CHAPTER VII.

M. de Laveleye.

ONE of the most charming of all Madame Novikoff's correspondents was M. de Laveleye. If it were not for a handwriting that is almost as bad as Count Beust's, I should rank him next to Mr. Kinglake and Mr. Froude as the most interesting of all her correspondents. But how can you do justice to a letter-writer when his caligraphy is almost undecipherable ?

M. de Laveleye was one of the most cosmopolitan of men. A Belgian by birth, he was a European of the best type. A political economist, a philosopher, a humanitarian, and a politician, he touched life at many points, and everything that he touched he brightened. He was an indefatigable worker, and was constantly travelling. He had a wide acquaintance among all the leading statesmen in England and on the Continent. His correspondence with Madame Novikoff appears to have begun in 1876, and was kept up till his death.

Among the voluminous writings of M. de Laveleye, his book on the Balkan and its peoples holds a high place. He wielded a practised pen with ease and freedom, and few writers are at once as luminous and as painstaking. He wrote for the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the leading English Reviews upon political and economical subjects. Although he was now and then a bit of a doctrinaire, the width of his

sympathies and the quickness of his perception delivered him from the ever-present temptation of degenerating into a pedant. It is not difficult to understand the attraction which made Madame Novikoff and M. de Laveleye friends from the first. For perfect friendship it is quite as necessary that there should be divergence of opinion on some things as there should be sympathetic agreement upon the fundamentals. M. de Laveleye, au fond, was, as he once told her, above all things a Slavophile. But he approached the problem from a very different standpoint. He was a Democrat and a Socialist. He was oppressed when he visited Russia by the contrast between the magnificence of the palaces of St. Petersburg and the squalid poverty of the peasants. At a very early stage of their acquaintance he told her: "I am a Catheder Socialist of the reddest description, redder even than M. Stöcker, the German Emperor's Court Preacher." And his unbounded admiration for the self-sacrificing enthusiasm of the Nihilists occasionally jarred upon the political sensibilities and social principles of his correspondent, who was too near the conflagration to be able to admire the flames from the point of view of an artist.

But these were but passing frictions, hardly rough enough to disturb their mutual confidence. They appear to have met for the first time at the end of 1875 or the beginning of 1876, and the letter which he addressed to her after they parted illustrates as well as any other the terms which were immediately established between them. M. de Laveleye had the happy gift of being able to express admiration without flattery, and, unlike men of a more reserved race, he took a pleasure in saying pleasant things. The following letter is a characteristic illustration of the

mingling of airy compliment and the serious discussion of religious and speculative questions which is often to be found in his correspondence :—

" LIÈGE, *Jan.* 13, 1876.—How short your stay was ! 'Twas like some vision of grace, of wit, and of goodwill. How exceedingly good of you to have given me your news. You speak of confidence. It is indeed strange. I write to you as if we were old friends, and the moments that I pass with you are all too brief. When shall I see you again ? I will send you soon my article on 'The Religious Future of Civilised Peoples.' The question I ask in it is : Can Humanity live without religious belief ? It seems to me that it cannot. Alas, I am turning pessimistic ! I augur ill. The future of civilised society and customs fills me with foreboding. Men are sad at heart. Where is the frivolous and graceful gaiety of the eighteenth century and the happy carelessness of primitive days ? "

The friendship which had thus auspiciously begun continued on these terms till the end. Perhaps there was more of compliment in the earlier letters and more of serious interchange of political ideas later on. But M. de Laveleye was always frank, nor did he hesitate to chaff her at times—when, for instance, he thought the homage of Kinglake a little exaggerated. On May 14, 1880, he wrote her :—

" I have read what you sent me in the *Quarterly*. It is indeed most flattering. After having led the Old Catholic Movement, you have led the political situation, actually directed Gladstone ; so that you are really and truly Queen of England ! Dare I say that that must all be true ? . . .

"Don't forget," he added, "that health is the instrument of all work."

Alas! he often forgot it himself. He was always overworking. He wrote to her once :—

"*Feb.* 11, 1881.—Before another year you will see my brain will be completely used up! Imagine, for twenty years I have had in hand a great work, to be the quintessence of all my works—and I can get nothing done. Each year, each month some new question engrosses me, and there I am—wasting my time in one or another journal and review."

Man must labour for the bread which perisheth, but even in the perishing sustains the life of the man. It is often doubtful whether, in the passing polemic of the ephemeral periodical, an author may not get his thoughts home to the minds of his contemporaries better than if he massed his ideas and his observations in a book which mankind might or might not have either the time or the inclination to read.

Madame Novikoff distinctly preferred that M. de Laveleye should take part from day to day in the fierce combat of opposing convictions that went on unceasing in the lists of public opinion. And well she might, for with the exception of his penchant (philosophical) for the Nihilists and his weakness for Austria (due to the prompting of temporary expediency), he seldom wrote a line which she did not endorse. For instance, he says :—

"*Oct.* 8, 1878.—I have sent Morley an article on the Berlin Treaty, in which I show that that of San Stefano was a great deal better. It is a reply to Castelar."

Again, when her book came out in 1880, he reviewed

it appreciatively in the same periodical, although the editor, much to M. de Laveleye's chagrin, insisted upon omitting his opening eulogy of the authoress.

He was always an enthusiast about her writings, and valued her judgment above his own. When her article "Lord Salisbury as Herald Angel" appeared in the autumn of 1879, he wrote :—

"LIÈGE, *Nov.* 20, 1879.—Your last letter was one of the best you have done : full of wit, apt touches, and perfectly well placed and arranged (parfaitement en situation).

"Lord Salisbury, using not his own sword but that of Germany, is admirably ridiculed.

"At bottom the situation seems to me to be a disquieting one. I think that Bismarck has taken up against Russia the plan he took up in 1875 against France.

"And in effect the moment is favourable. He fears that he may one day have against him the Triple Alliance, and, in accordance with Prussian tactics, he wishes to forestall the enemy. But—let us hope—the Emperor William will not go so far as to declare war.

"I am explaining all that in my own way in an article which I am going to publish in the *Fortnightly* of December 1.

"What I want is the emancipation of the Slavs from Turkey and the dismissal of the Turk into Asia, with *bag and baggage*. As people will not allow this meritorious task to be carried out by Russia, who, however, has begun it so well, I should like to see it completed by Austria and England.

"I am above all *a Slavophile*.

"When my article appears, if you have a moment

to read it, may I ask you to tell me frankly your opinion ?

"You are not one of those whom one forgets. For a long time I have wished to write to you—but where ? In Europe ?—Sincerely,

"Émile de Laveleye."

Madame Novikoff at his suggestion wrote an occasional article in *La Flandre Libérale*, but she did not accept his proposal. He had asked her to write :—

"From time to time correspondence freely developing your ideas on Eastern Politics from the Continental point of view—I mean for Continental readers.

"No journal is more widely read here than the *Flandre Libérale*, and even outside it has subscribers. You would be able to be reproduced by the French better than your letters to the *Echo* written specially for English readers."

His own point of view as to the future of the Balkan he expresses in a letter written December 12, 1879 :—

"The misery from which people suffer springs from the foreign rôle which their sovereigns make them play, from wars, debts, taxes, and all the miseries of our Western World. That is what we want to persuade the Slavs to avoid. . . . My ideal is not England but Switzerland. My idea is that we should make of the Balkan territories a federation of agricultural states. But all this would lead me a long way. Your article is excellent. It is exactly what I wanted to see."

Few Continental observers followed with keener interest and profounder sympathy the fortunes of the Liberal party in the great electoral struggle of 1880.

M. de Laveleye gently chided Madame Novikoff for her scepticism. He wrote, December 1879 :—

" Your last letter was very hard upon our English friends — too hard even, for I believe that if they return to power they will take to heart the freedom of the Slavs."

When the victory was won, while rejoicing over the triumph of Midlothian he was alarmed about Mr. Gladstone's health :—

" *April* 12, 1880.—I was most grieved to hear of Gladstone's illness. He is the only friend of Justice among the powerful ones of this world ! Happily, he is out of danger.

" Gladstone is indeed a prodigy of power. He is one of the noble figures of our century."

They agreed better about Mr. Gladstone than they did about the providential mission of Austria in liberating the Slavs of Turkey. M. de Laveleye's view was that Austria was destined to achieve this emancipation and at the same time to dig her own grave in doing it :—

" Ardennes, *Aug.* 7, 1880.—Pan-Slavism is not a chimera.

" But do not forget this : only the Anglo-Saxons and yourselves have room—they in America and Australia, you in Asia-Europe. So you will have Constantinople and the rest.

" Would it not be better, in the interests of human liberty, to have two Slavic states ? If so, then Austria's rôle is clear. Will she know how to undertake it ? I am far from being sure of that. I had

some hope of it when I saw Haymerle. I had a long discussion about it with him in Rome in 1878, and he was quite of my opinion. But German and Hungarian prejudices may prevent it, possibly ? probably ?

" Lord Bath long ago made clear to me (in a letter which I received at the same time as yours) his reasons for doubting the solution, which he recognised, however, as desirable.

" I am sending you my *Letters from Italy* by a friend whom pray permit me to introduce to you—M. Montefiore. He belongs to the ' Chosen People,' but he is more English and very cultivated. You ought not to be prejudiced on this point. I admire these wonderful people. He is a brother-in-law of Hirsch, but nothing of a business man. . . .

" Ancient Greek régime for your son—exercise for the body and peace for the mind ! "

Madame Novikoff, so far from being "prejudiced on this point," has always endeavoured to atone by the cordiality of her relations with individual Jews for the theoretical dislike of the Semitic race she has inherited. M. Montefiore became one of the friends whom she liked and esteemed very much.

M. de Laveleye, although constantly flitting backwards and forwards between Belgium and London, could never entirely reconcile himself to some deeply ingrained English notions. For instance, here is an example of his attitude upon what has long been one of the first principles of our naval policy in time of war :—

" CHELUVELT, *près* YPRES, *Aug.* 28, 1880— . . . I shall hardly be in time to reach Oxford. There is to be a discussion there on ' The Right to capture Private Property at Sea,'—a monstrous and barbarous custom, which our English friends continue to defend

and of which they themselves would be the first victims. I shudder to think of the ill which an enemy might work them. . . ."

On her journeys to and fro Madame Novikoff necessarily passed through Liège, and occasionally spent a few hours with her friends. M. de Laveleye wrote, October 24, 1880 :—

"I sincerely trust you will stop at Liège on your way to Russia. Has peace been made with Montefiore ? Will you not go and make the acquaintance of Madame Montefiore, who is really charming ? "

Madame Novikoff sent me the following description of the visit which she made in response to that invitation :—

"ST. PETERSBURG,
December 16/28, 1880.

"Several people were asked to meet me. They came in spite of the inundations, which rendered circulation in the town rather difficult. After dinner they began talking of music. I offered a song—more for my own satisfaction than for anybody else's. The Laveleyes did not know I had a voice—I had no idea they cared for singing. It turned out that Laveleye was mad about music and a positive connoisseur.

"Now for those who are passionately fond of music there is a communion of souls unknown and incomprehensible to musicphobes. It is a kind of freemasonry particularly precious to those whose life has not been covered only with roses and joys : it is a link between the invisible and visible world, as life is between a corpse and an animated being. I sang, forgetting completely the scene around me, quite identifying myself with images created or reproduced

in my own imagination. Schumann's 'Frauenleben und Liebe' is a series of admirable songs representing a whole life, which collapsed very tragically on the half-way. When I finished people rushed towards me, thanking me as if I had bestowed a favour upon them. An old lady, with a black moustache which my son Sasha might envy, even wanted to kiss me, and did so, with a vehemence I little expected. M. de Laveleye, looking very pale but paying no other compliment to my 'Frauen liebe,' hurriedly said, 'If you insist upon leaving us so soon, the carriage is ready.' Only when we were alone did Laveleye venture to speak of my singing and of myself. The dear man! How unconventional, how outspoken, how fearless he is! How open-hearted and generous! But what struck me was that there was no contradiction in what he now said and what he so often alluded to in all his letters! It makes one good to see such men. *Wahrheit und Dichtung* united is what one ought to care most for. . . ."

The sympathy was mutual. M. de Laveleye was always urging her to undertake fresh tasks, one of which at least she never attempted. He wrote :—

"You must set to work and write a history of the Turko-Russian War: its origin, its aim, its episodes, the service rendered by it to the world.

"Take to heart the meaning of our maxim, 'Repos ailleurs,' which you already practise. You ought to write that. Nothing could be more useful to your cause.

"Do write that history!"

That history has remained unwritten. M. de Laveleye himself would have done the work admirably.

In 1881 he came to London in order to assist in the organised effort to place the White Slave Trade of the world under more effective restraint. M. de Laveleye was one of the most active and useful coadjutors of Mrs. Josephine Butler in her heroic struggle against the Governmental regulation and recognition of Prostitution and all its related horrors. Madame Novikoff had written lamenting his silence. He replied :—

"London, *July 7*.

"Dear Madame,—Don't blame me too quickly. If you only knew what I have had to do !

"I have come here in connection with two very different questions.

"First, *the White Slave Trade*, of which the Belgians are justly accused. Our regulations are infamous. I have had to tell the House of Lords' Committee so, and on that account I have had to see a great many people—take part in a meeting—even speak there in English—and draw up a memorandum on the subject.

"Secondly, the question of Bimetallism, which in my opinion is of the highest importance. . . .

"The European situation is very unsettled everywhere. The Tunis affair is deplorable. Still, it is a guarantee for us. There you have France *la Protégée*, and therefore the ally of Germany. It is Lord Salisbury who has invented *cette jolie chose*.

"The quarrel over the Commercial Treaties is another very regrettable business. Fights and bickering all round. How stupid men are.

"I saw Gladstone at his house, but he is entirely taken up with his Irish Bill. It is a great novelty : Justice introduced into political economy."

Later in the year, when M. de Laveleye had

returned to Liège, he replied to a letter in which Madame Novikoff had deplored the steady financialisation of France :—

"Liège, *Oct.* 5, 1881.—Your impression of France is quite correct. I was scared by the same thing myself in the spring. Everybody is going into business! Even the *Revue des Deux Mondes* now publishes fortnightly a Financial Chronicle! This is ridiculous and deplorable. And to think that all these financiers are living at the expense of the people, the only true producers. How is it possible that it should all end otherwise than by a second burning of Paris, more complete than the first? That seems to me inevitable."

The anticipated conflagration that was to eclipse the suppression of the Commune has not yet taken place. But it haunted the imagination of M. de Laveleye. In the following year, after a visit to Paris, he returns to the subject again :—

"Liège, *May* 20, 1882.—At bottom, family and fatherland are necessities, like crutches. But they are very narrow, and banal. Jesus repudiated these barriers in His contemplation of Humanity and Universal Justice, and He was right.

"I have found France ultra-pacific, and that is a proof of her wisdom. She is very unprepared for war. They are engaged in demolishing the concentrated and powerful edifice created by the old régime and by Napoleon. That is very good if one has dreams of organising the Democracy; but if one is aspiring to be revenged, 'tis an error. That is just what Gambetta sees very clearly!

"In my opinion, one must choose between Revenge

and a Republic. A Republic is a bad fighting instrument for France. Renan said to me: 'We shall see unheard-of destructions, such as that of Jerusalem can hardly give an idea of.'

"I too think that France will be *flambé* more completely than she was the first time. But not soon. The falling-to-pieces will be slow. What might hasten the catastrophe would be a foreign war. I must say that that is feared on all sides. I am convinced that Bismarck desires it. But without provocation the Emperor will not consent. . . .

"You truly say that the assassination of Alexander II. was odious. . . . See where we are in Europe. Dynamite and dagger everywhere, in the hands of Revolt."

It may not be without interest to compare M. de Laveleye's gloomy prognostication as to the fate of Paris and the French Republic, with the notes on his impressions of France, which Mr. Froude sent to Madame Novikoff in the eighties:—

"*March* 20, 1880.—Paris is sadly changed since I last saw it—that was in 1870, just before the war. The soldiers who then strutted about as if the world was under their feet seem now abject and poor, like sick flies in October. Paris itself, magnificent Paris, is like a splendid country-house whose owner is half ruined and cannot live up to it. The carriages went in their usual thousands to the Bois de Boulogne yesterday (Easter Sunday), but they looked shabby; even the horses were out of spirits, and the ladies were quietly and modestly dressed. The worst sign is the literature in the shop windows, which is more dissolute, if possible, than it was under the Empire.

"My *impression* is that this Republic will not hold very long; the army is kept out of sight here, you hardly see a sentinel—you never see a detachment marching or a squadron riding. The soldiers walk about looking melancholy and helpless. But nevertheless the army is a fact, and the French are a military people. They will not always be under eclipse. Before ten years are out I think they will have a soldier at their head again. We shall see if we are alive, and if we are not it will not matter."

"*April* 2, 1880.—Paris, which used to be like an Opera House in the glory of full performance, looked now to me like the Opera House of the next morning with the daylight let in upon it; the enchantment gone, and only the hard, cold facts remaining.

"The blouses about St. Antoine had something of the old devil about them, otherwise all looked tame and draggled and drooping."

"*February* 26, 1884.—The clouds seem lifting from off Russia, and settling down upon unfortunate France. The Revolution has done its work; she can produce no more great men, and therefore there is no more wisdom, no more courage, no more intellect. Even Madame Adam's *Revue* has grown dull."

"*September* 7, 1887.—I have been in correspondence again with my old friend General Cluseret, who is in Paris, preparing for another brush up. He has sent me his diary of the Siege of Paris in 1871, with an appendix on 'What is to be done now?' and the thing to be done now is to make a clean sweep of all debts, beginning with the National Debt, the dissolution of the Army, and the extermination by blood and fire of the unfortunate Bourgeoisie. This is all

written down by a calm and in some ways remarkable man. It is published in Paris, where the work is to begin, favourably reviewed in the newspapers, and nobody is disturbed or displeased. They are a queer people, and I don't wonder that the Tsar is shy of too close an alliance with them."

To return to M. de Laveleye.

In his next letter we come upon an interesting appreciation—not very favourable—of Gambetta :—

"LIÈGE, *Jan.* 4, 1883.—Gambetta's death[1] saddens me ; for he was a personality, and how rare are personalities nowadays. But it is a guarantee of peace for Europe, and as a whole he was mediocre. A great orator, but for an idea of his own, not for a great principle of which he made himself the defender.

"'Clericalism is the enemy,' but that has been the common bond of all our Liberal papers for the past thirty years. He loved his country ; he served it well in 1871 ; but the idea of revenge by arms seems to me so narrow. So much fighting for a strip of earth ! What banality !

"Those who sacrifice themselves for the idea of Justice, *i.e.* of the equality and the liberty of mankind, like the Nihilists, are much superior. Garibaldi, Kossuth, Mazzini, were very much superior to Gambetta—a powerful banality. . . . The year begins sadly. Gladstone ill, Gambetta dead. Depression everywhere. Universal and rapid falling of moral and intellectual level. I feel myself overcome with pessimism."

The following are brief extracts from his letters to her in 1883 :—

[1] Gambetta died December 31, 1882.

"LIÈGE, *March* 8, 1883.—Have you read *Unto this Last*, and the *Crown of Wild Olive*, by Ruskin? Very deep. They are the very bottom of Political Economy."

"PRÈS LIÈGE, *Aug.* 4, 1883.—If Russia wants to combat Austrian influence, let her uphold the old communal liberties against the bureaucratic and centralising mania of the Austrians.

"In Turkey, there is disorganisation unimaginable. If Gladstone quits Egypt, I curse him in the name of humanitarian interests."

"LIÈGE, *Nov.* 30, 1883.—Our English friends are becoming furiously socialistic. What do you think of Chamberlain? And Salisbury? Is it tactics or conviction?"

After travelling in the Near East, he returned more furious than ever with the insensate folly of the English Jingoes who in 1878 insisted upon marring the liberating work of Russia. He writes:—

"LIÈGE, *Feb.* 13, 1884.—I am furious with Beaconsfield, who has replaced the Treaty of San Stefano by that of Berlin. I stayed within a pace or two of the villa where the Treaty was signed at San Stefano, and I saluted it with respect. I almost bought it. It was worth 100,000 francs, and is still for sale at 30,000.

"Do you get the *P.M.G.*? I expect you do. I write in it from time to time. Yesterday I wrote an article to prove that the English cannot leave Egypt. Their foreign policy is contradictory. I hope our friends will understand it. In the *Fortnightly* I said that I was announcing to them the necessity

of taking Egypt. *Triste, très triste! Mais logique de l'Inde.*"

The development of our Egyptian policy in its Gordon stage pleased him as little as any one else :—

"ARGENTAU (LIÈGE), *June* 18, 1884.—I accept Austria because she alone can now save the Slavs of the Peninsula. Everything depends upon her, *i.e.* upon Bismarck. What did Beust tell you of his views concerning the omnipotent Chancellor ?

"Poor England ! Poor Gladstone ! What humiliating powerlessness both in counsel and in action. One does so ill what one does against one's will.

". . . Obtain from Gladstone what I have earnestly solicited of him : the re-establishment of the two English Consulates in Macedonia which were abolished for economy's sake ! If he does not do it, and quickly, Salisbury won't.

". . . Only yesterday I wrote to Fitzmaurice about the Consulates."

Notice the appeal to her to obtain from Mr. Gladstone the establishment of British Consulates in Macedonia—as if Madame Novikoff had only to speak to be obeyed. Alas, had it been so, many things would have gone better than they did! But the impression that she was all-powerful was widely spread. For instance, M. de Laveleye writes to her :—

"BRUSSELS, *Aug.* 5, 1884.—This morning Prince Orloff, who was passing through here, spoke much to me of your mother's beauty ; of your brother's devotion ; of yourself, your *esprit supérieur* and your devotion to Slavism ; all in terms which were not displeasing to me, as you may imagine.

"He is convinced that you hold our friend Gladstone, and hence England, under your charming and all-powerful thumb."

Later, when Khartoum had fallen and General Gordon's gallant struggle was at an end, M. de Laveleye wrote to her when he was mourning the death of an old friend:—

"I have been long in writing to you, but I have been simply overwhelmed. The oldest friend of my childhood is dead. As one grows older these blows come oftener, until at last one's own turn comes.

"I have allowed myself to engage upon too many works and occupations, and so I have got nothing serious done. I ought to revise my book on 'Democracy'—out of print—and I have no time for it.

"But you! You have not all these calls upon you.

"Mr. Bunting writes me that some one has made a superb portrait of you. But have they got the lustre of your soul? I doubt it!

"Your friend Gladstone, will he be able to bear up after the death of Gordon?

"It is astonishing how the Republican ideal is gaining ground among us; first with the Liberals, and now among the clergy. The Constitutional régime is decidedly very unstable.

"Shortly 'Macedonian Atrocities' (No. 1.) will appear in the *P.M.G.* Support me in this campaign for humanity."

M. de Laveleye was right about the portrait referred to by Sir Percy W. Bunting, the editor of the *Contemporary Review*. It was painted by Schmiechen. The artist has reproduced the figure

admirably, but "the lustre of the soul" is another matter.

In his next letter he refers again to the Gordon catastrophe :—

"*Feb.* 29, 1885.—Your letter has given me much pleasure. Poor England! Poor Gladstone!

"One thing is very clear: Democratic England can't maintain her immense Colonial Empire. It is contrary to the opinions of the Democracy. For that, order and strength are necessary, which is lacking to a succession of men fully engrossed with home affairs—Chamberlain, for example.

"Gladstone does not want Egypt. But in that case he must allow France to go there; and this is what the English people will not allow.

"Stead has good reason for his campaign—too much reason, alas!

"And our friends the Bulgarians? Do you think of them in the midst of your greatness? The Greeks behave abominably. Can Russia do nothing for them at Constantinople? The nomination of two new Bulgarian Bishops at Macedonia has produced the best effect.

"Can you let me have any information about the situation in Macedonia, or let me know who can give it me?

"You are powerful yonder. I myself, alas! have only a little fount of pen and ink, and I cannot always find where to place its lucubrations."

In 1885 came the stormy agitation about the Maiden Tribute and the Penjdeh wrangle. He refers repeatedly and sympathetically to our "poor friend Stead," who has "shown great courage, but will be

stoned one of these days"—a prophecy which it is to be hoped will not help to bring about its own fulfilment. He also predicted that I should lose my health by overworking my brain—a misfortune which has lingered for twenty-four years and is lingering yet.

Although M. de Laveleye had urged the British annexation of Egypt, he had no patience with the land-grabbing policy then in vogue :—

"*Sept.* 3, 1885.— . . . A strange mania, this making of colonies, and one which causes the spending of more money—and perhaps of more blood—than it will bring compensation for two centuries to come.

"Colonies, except those of emigration—like Australia—mean subjection, exploitation, *i.e.* inequality, spoliation, crimes of all kinds."

On the Afghan Question M. de Laveleye wrote :—

"How incapable Granville has been in his negotiations with Bismarck and Russia! His permanent vacillations in regard to the Afghan frontier business, which have left open a very thorny question, are both perilous and ridiculous."

When Eastern Roumelia threw in its lot with Bulgaria, M. de Laveleye wrote :—

"What events in the East! How do they affect you? For my part, I approve. But I am indignant at the coldness and even hostility of the friends of liberty and right on the Continent. I hope at least that your generous and enthusiastic soul will speak up for our poor friends in Bulgaria (the best of the nations in that quarter). Has Russia really been taken unawares? Is she angry with France? Why?

Turkey is being destroyed. Is not that what you have always wanted? Tell me your real thought."

M. de Laveleye was something of a doctrinaire in the prescriptions he was ever ready to supply to Empires and Republics. Here, for instance, is a prescription for Russia :—

"I think your new Emperor is animated with the best sentiments. Quite devoted to the true people. What is wanted in Russia is a Frederick II. minus his ideas of conquest."

"LIÈGE, *Aug.* 11.— . . . Russia should renounce carrying on an *active* foreign policy; economise; especially lessen military expenses; fill the country with peasants *à la Suisse* . . . and diminish administrative machinery; disarm Nihilism by making the Crown a democratic and socialistic institution.

"A socialist sovereign, as Lorenz von Stein said, is what is wanted now . . . to re-steep Russia in the regenerating bath of Democratic principles; then it is necessary, as in the case of America, to abstain from meddling in the miserable rivalries of the West."

All his remaining letters relate to the turmoil in Macedonia, and subsequently in Bulgaria. M. de Laveleye knew the country well, and his criticisms of Russian policy were not animated by any lack of sympathy with Russia :—

"LIÈGE, *August* 3, 1885.

"If I had not received the music (for which both I and my daughter are extremely grateful), I should have been a little uneasy at not having had any reply to my last letters.

"But I learnt from M. de Kiréeff that you are at Moscow, much occupied and preoccupied by the health of your son.

"What a scare in London! The *P.M.G.* has done splendidly. Our friend Stead is certainly going strong. What nerve, what strength of mind there is in this mystical, spiritual dreamer!

"I am receiving news from Macedonia which much disturbs me. Panic and despair are everywhere. The refugees have decided to act in the spring. This would be awful. For there would first be massacres, then probably Austria would take things in hand, which would be even more displeasing to you than to me.

"Gueshoff writes to me that what will provoke an outbreak is the attitude of the Russian consuls. It is no doubt a *mot d'ordre*, but it is very awkward; it is going too far. To calm the people they should be encouraged as to the future. They should be told: You will be attended to when more important affairs are cleared up. If the Porte would only grant the Buriat."

"Liège, *September* 11, 1885.

"Here I am at home again after going about at random in Baden and in Switzerland in quest of the Germans at first, and then of the *Referendum*.

"I could not give you my address, because I did not stay long anywhere, and I went from one village to another according to directions given me.

"Enchanted to find your news here.

"I have seen in the *P.M.G.* that Gladstone spoke of you at Edinburgh in terms which must have caused you pleasure. What you say of Miss Irby is truly admirable. What devotion on her part! One can hardly realise the effect of such a school in those

countries. The greater number of the men who have made things move in Roumelia and in Bulgaria come from Robert College.

"Poor Macedonia! What horrors they have passed through each day. I received yesterday visits from two students from our University in Bulgaria and in Russia, both devoted to the cause of the Slavs. They have promised to make me acquainted with the details of the Macedonian Atrocities, of which I shall try to make good use.

"I shall urge at Sofia the publication of my leaflet, which I am sending to all the deputies.

"I am grieved that Lord Dufferin may be going to India. He was well affected towards the Rayahs. Fitzmaurice, alas! has grown so chilly. See what you, on your part, can do.

"Your country is deeply stirred; but the Liberals are in a false position. They cannot appeal to the people. The peasants are under the thumb of the clergy.

"I am sending Stead an article upon the *Referendum*.

"And now, what are you doing in London??

"You cannot be there and doing nothing!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause."

THE recent annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary recalls the fact that at every stage of Austrian aggression in the Balkans Madame Novikoff has protested in the name of the Slavonic world against the Austrian usurpation. In 1879, when she satirised Lord Salisbury's Austrian Evangel; in 1881, when the Slavs rose against the enforcement of the conscription; in 1882, when she published her memorable manifesto-book, *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*; in 1888, when she denounced Austria's supposed designs upon Salonica; and again in 1908, when she was the first to lift up her voice of protest in the *Times* against the lawless annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, she has been the weariless, consistent, undaunted, and resolute opponent of Austrian designs. No other living person, man or woman, has such a record. She denounced the betrayal of the Southern Slavs to Prince Gortschakoff in 1878, and to-day, thirty years later, she is as prompt to remind M. Isvolsky of his duty to the Slavonic Cause.

The fate of a couple of millions of Slavs in the mountainous provinces in the north-west of the Ottoman Empire may seem to be a small thing to the English, who count the subjects of their King by four hundred millions. But to the Slavs, especially to the Russian Slavs, the question is supremely

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important. The fate of the Holy Sepulchre stirred all mediæval Europe for generation after generation. Bosnia and the Herzegovina have become to the devout Slavophile a kind of Holy Sepulchre. It was a Bosnian king who, as far back as 1396, first raised the Standard of Pan-Slavism by appealing in the name of Slavonic unity to the Poles to support him against his Magyar enemies. It was in Bosnia and the Herzegovina that was first raised the standard of revolt in 1875, and so brought about the liberation of Bulgaria. To the Pan-Slavists there is something like sacrilege in allowing the cradle of Slavonic freedom to be handed over to the Austrian.

Madame Novikoff not merely shares this feeling, she has expressed it, and what is more, she has to a considerable extent enabled the Western World to understand and sympathise. This was the task she set herself to perform in her book *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*, which appeared in 1882, shortly after the sudden death of that popular hero.

Madame Novikoff had many qualifications for writing that book. She was a personal friend of General Skobeleff. She had been his political ally. She entirely shared his political sympathies and his political antipathies.

Shortly before her tragic death in Bulgaria, Madame Skobeleff asked Madame Novikoff to accompany her on a tour through the liberated land where her son was in command of the army of occupation. General Novikoff's illness prevented the acceptance of the tempting invitation, and Madame Skobeleff went to her doom alone.[1]

[1] She was murdered by the Montenegrin officer General Skobeleff had selected for her escort as the most trustworthy of his staff. The murderer, who never touched her money or her jewels, immediately after his crime committed suicide.

Skobeleff, who had achieved great fame during the war by winning victory after victory, eclipsed even his military fame by the two speeches delivered in the last year of his life, by which he arrested the ambition of Austria and postponed for a quarter of a century the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. He died at the early age of thirty-nine. Had he been living to-day, it is probable Austria would have thought twice and even thrice before announcing her determination to tear up the Berlin Treaty in order to annex the two provinces.

When Madame Novikoff undertook to write his Life for the English public, she sought not merely to do homage to a national hero, but to interpret the aspirations of the Slavs to the Western World.

It is a charming book, full of most interesting and illuminating anecdotes of one of the most brilliant and fascinating of warriors and most faithful of comrades.

M. de Laveleye was very enthusiastic. He wrote :—

" I have received and devoured your *Skobeleff*.

" Apart from the talent of the work, I admire the spirit of enthusiasm which animates every page of the book. It is of a different order from our Western publications. Here everything is old and effete (out of tune with the times). You still have faith as men had it in the eighteenth century.

" It is because you have a *future* before you.

" Here, apart from the hope of reforms, on the lines of Socialistic equality—what remains for us ?

" Listen to the advice of economists ? and make money ! "

The biography and character sketch of General Skobeleff compose the first part of the book. The

second is devoted to the Slavonic cause. To this day her *Life of Skobeleff* is the only intelligible popular exposition of Pan-Slavism in the English language.

It is impossible even to summarise here the exposition which she gives of enthusiasms, of aspirations, and of antipathies which will yet remould the map of Eastern Europe. But some account must be given of that portion of her manifesto, for such it is, that relates to the question of Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

The Berlin Congress, according to Lord Beaconsfield, consolidated the Ottoman Empire. What it did was to give European sanction to the Treaty of San Stefano with two modifications. Bulgaria was "sawn asunder" into three parts: Bulgaria free, Eastern Roumelia half-free, and Macedonia re-enslaved. That was one modification. The other was to give a European Mandate to Austria-Hungary to pacify, to occupy, and to administer the provinces of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. It is just those modifications which have perished, while what was left of the Treaty of San Stefano remains, to justify the statesmanship of Russia.

Russia has of all the Powers been most loyal to the Berlin Settlement. When Bulgaria absorbed Eastern Roumelia, Russia was one of the least sympathetic of the Great Powers. Russia had consented before the war to an Austrian occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. It was the price she had to pay to Vienna for Austrian consent to the liberation of Bulgaria and Servia. Austria professed publicly her undying fidelity to the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire, continuing to do so after she had extorted from Russia consent to the occupation of the two provinces. When

Lord Beaconsfield threatened to go to war with Russia if the Turks were not allowed to garrison the Balkan Passes, he relied upon the support of Austria, and it was the danger of having to fight both England and Austria which in Prince Gortschakoff's eyes justified Russia's concessions at Berlin.

The Turks, who had not been consulted about this Russo-Austrian agreement for the occupation of their two north-west provinces, at first refused to sign the Berlin Treaty. Their consent was only obtained on the Austrians signing a secret declaration that the occupation was *provisional* and that the Sultan's sovereignty remained *unimpaired*.[1]

In 1879 a convention was also drawn up between the Sultan and Austria-Hungary which provided for the maintenance of the Sultan's sovereignty under the Austrian occupation.

When Article 25 came up for discussion on July 5, Bismarck defined the rôle of Austria-Hungary as a "Mandate for supplying what is wanted in the Ottoman Administration, so as to fulfil the great duty of maintaining order and assuring the future of the population." It was certainly understood that the Mandate did not transfer sovereignty to the Dual Monarchy; that remained with the Sultan. Treaties

[1] The following is the text of this remarkable pledge, which was given on condition it should not be published :—

"Sur le desir exprimé par les plénipotentiaires ottomans au nom de leur gouvernement, les plénipotentiaires Austro-Hongrois declarent au nom du gouvernement de S.M. Imperiale et Royal Apostolique, que les droits de souveraineté de S.M.I. le Sultan sur les provinces de Bosnie et de le Herzegovine ne subirent aucune atteinte par le fait de l'occupation, dont il est question dans l'article relatif aux dites provinces, du traité à signer aujourd'hui; que l'occupation sera considerée comme provisoire et qu'une entente préalable sur les détails de l'occupation se fera immédiatement après la clôture du congrès entre les deux gouvernements."—*Revue des Deux Mondes*, October 1, 1908.

concluded with him remained in force—the conditions of import and export remained *in statu quo*. Goods in transit paid no duty to the Austrian Administration, and resident foreigners were under the jurisdiction of their consulates, excluding all local Austro-Hungarian jurisdiction. Had this not been the case, the Treaty could not have been ratified on August 3, 1878, unless the assent had been obtained of several of the Parliaments concerned.

It is interesting and instructive to note that ever since the Austrians occupied Bosnia and the Herzegovina there have been periodical alarms of war consequent upon that occupation. The first scare took place in 1881, when General Skobeleff at St. Petersburg and at Paris delivered two speeches, which alarmed all Europe at the time, but which averted the danger that then appeared imminent. The text of the Paris speech, if speech it could be termed, Madame Novikoff published in her book on *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*. It was a very significant manifesto, well worthy of study at the present moment.

The following are some passages from General Skobeleff's famous discourse :—

"Europe is in imminent danger of a great war. It is inevitable ; the provisions of the Berlin Treaty are to be trampled underfoot by Austria. Russia has no reason to love that Treaty. It was a bad Treaty for her and for the Southern Slavs ; but it at least secured the latter from being crushed by foreign despots. If it is violated, there will be war. It would be a mad war, a war of suicide, you say ? Perhaps. But there are some circumstances where even suicide is unavoidable. But there is no need for war.

"Peace can be maintained," continued he, "if

the facts are recognised in time. I wish to remind you of these facts, which the diplomatists, who are always for ignoring the truth until it is too late, have obscured.

"I have no hostility to Germany. But why does she not restrain Austria from aggression? If Berlin were to say, 'Hands off!' the word would be respected at Vienna. The Slavs only wish to remain Slavs. They object to be either Magyarised, Germanised, or Jesuit-ridden. Austria was only authorised to occupy and to administer, to restore order in the two provinces. She is now exceeding her commission. She is enforcing the conscription and promoting a Jesuit propaganda amongst the people. Russia had not delivered the Slavs from the Turk to have them trampled on by the Austrian. Even under the Turk the Slavs had more independence than under the oppressive yoke of the bureaucrats of Vienna. Why cannot she let them develop in their own way, and live their own life? It may be rough and rude; but such as it is, it must be the basis of their own social and political evolution. . . .

"Russia is the only State in Europe sufficiently idealistic to go to war for a sentiment. Her people shrink from no sacrifice in the cause of religion and of race. Beware lest you provoke them too far!"

It is a significant fact that almost at the very time General Skobeleff was making this speech in Paris Madame Novikoff was writing exactly similar sentiments in an article on "The Crisis in Servia" in the *Contemporary Review*. Both expounded the common faith, the master passion of the Slavonic heart. Both sounded a warning note of which Austria did well to take heed.

The circumstance which provoked this simultaneous protest was Austria's cynical defiance of the Treaty of Berlin, which enforced the conscription on the population of the occupied provinces. Turkey protested, declaring the conscription a flagrant violation of treaty faith and an act of usurpation. This was believed to be but the beginning of things.

Servia was to be annexed, Montenegro occupied. Bulgaria was to become the vassal of the Hapsburg. Austria was extending her influence in Roumania, and the Press was full of letters from well-informed correspondents describing her preparations for the advance on Salonica. The air was full of threats, which Russia heard in silence.

But when the brave peasants of the Herzegovina and of the Bocche drew the sword against the Austrian oppressor, then indeed the Russian heart was stirred to its depths.

And Skobeleff spoke. "His words, which fell like shells in the enemy's camp, destroyed in a moment the delusion—not less dangerous than absurd—that Russia could not be provoked too far."

"I remember," wrote Madame Novikoff, "talking to Skobeleff at Moscow a few weeks before his death. 'It amused me greatly,' he said, in his frank, charming way, 'to see what people said about my speech at St. Petersburg. "A soldier," they cried, "to talk politics! 'Tis monstrous." But they never seemed to remember that I was in Russia, where relations between the Sovereign and his subjects are quite different from those prevailing in constitutional countries. There really exists a paternal feeling between our Emperor and ourselves. Why should we not let him know what we think, what we suffer from,

what we long for? I thought it my duty to speak, and I spoke.'

"His speech," says Madame Novikoff, "did good —I really think it did. It cleared the air. It threw the shadow of the Russian sword across the path of the aggressor and bade him beware. I am not the only one to think that the warning sufficed. Skobeleff went to Paris profoundly convinced that there would be war if Austria persisted in carrying out the programme proclaimed by her journals. To prevent war, Austria must be reminded of the limits of the Treaty of Berlin; and as no one else seemed disposed to bell the cat, Skobeleff determined to do the work himself."

He did it pretty effectively, although Madame Novikoff says: "I saw Skobeleff several times after his return, and each time he denied having made any speech at all in Paris in the ordinary sense of the word. But he talked all the time in an informal kind of way, and one thing he said went home :—

"'The West is deluded about Russia. It thinks that we are so crippled by the late war as to be helpless. It is a mistake. A nation of ninety millions capable of sacrificing itself with enthusiasm for an ideal is not so easily effaced. Our provinces are disordered, we are weakened by the war, and the Nihilists, those deformed children of German Philosophy, are giving trouble; but Russia is still living, and if certain lines were overpassed she would fight.'"

Gambetta eagerly welcomed Skobeleff's overtures. "The speech," he told Skobeleff, "has done great good; it has filled all hearts with patriotic ardour, and rouses hopes of a Franco-Russian Alliance." But Ivan Aksakoff shook his sagacious head and said:

"Gambetta has one enemy—Germany. Skobeleff's enemy is Austria, the aggressor of Slavonic nationality."

Skobeleff's outburst was justified by the results, but it scared many people not a little, among others Mr. Froude. He wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

"Such a war as Skobeleff contemplates would be one of those follies which are worse than crimes. *Crimes* may be pardoned when they fit in with the general laws of things ; *Follies* never.

"For you to defy all Europe at this moment will be condemned by the universal conscience of the whole impartial world, and you will suffer for it. Your friends here, your friends everywhere outside your own borders, will have to confess that they were wrong ; and inside your own borders what have you to look for ? I do not augur favourably of Mr. Katkoff's judgment when he allows himself to be prevented from advocating measures which he thinks right by the silly talk of a few English platforms."

Madame Novikoff having replied somewhat sharply, Mr. Froude wrote meekly on March 30, 1882 :—

"I merely wished to know (having been astonished, with the rest of the world, at the Skobeleff incident) whether there was to be an immediate Slav crusade against the Teutonic nations, in which case I should know what to do. You might win in such a contest. Austria, at all events, might be knocked to pieces ; but your financial condition would be beyond help. You would not wring *five milliards* out of Vienna, or even out of Berlin and Vienna combined. And

in my poor opinion your present business is to set your own house in order. A Russia growing strong in peace, and the internal development of its immense resources, would *do* all you want, by silent influence, and by the fear and respect which it would inspire."

Madame Novikoff put the question pointedly to Skobeleff :—

" 'So there was actually no aggressive attack on Germany?' I asked him on his return to Russia. 'Certainly not,' he replied. 'It is surely no great offence to Germany to demand that the Treaty drawn up under the Presidency of Prince Bismarck and signed at Berlin should not be treated as waste paper.' "

The Slavophile attitude then was to isolate Austria by assuring Germany of the unalterable fidelity of Russia to the German Empire if Prince Bismarck would not encourage Austrian aggression in the Balkan. It appears to have succeeded. For Austria made no move in these regions for twenty-six years.

Madame Novikoff, in her chapter on " Russia and Austria," expounded the Slav point of view (she wrote in 1882) with painstaking fidelity. She began by quoting Prince Gortschakoff's witticism: " Austria is not a nation; she is not even a state; she is only a Government." " How is it," she asks, " that Austria is so deeply detested in all Slavonic countries belonging and not belonging to her? What is hateful in Austria?" She answers her question thus: " It is her hatred, her injustice, her cruelty; the persecution of all Slavs who refuse to become renegades.

" Take away that systematic persecution, and hate will exist no more, nor unfriendly feeling in any Slav, be he Russian or Bosniak, be he Eastern Church-

man or any other Churchman you like. If there were even a slight attempt to do justice to the Slavs, there might spring up a friendliness between the Russian nation and the 'piebald Conglomeration.'"

She continues :—

"What do we, the Russian Slavophiles, ask from the Austrian Government? We only wish that the Slavs should be allowed to live their own life without being molested in their rights either as Slavs or as Christians. If the house of Hapsburg consented to be just towards her Slavonic nationalities, it naturally would have all the Slavophiles of Russia as allies. When Lord Salisbury played the part of Herald Angel, Austria accepted the part of gaoler of the Slav nationalities. The English elections first made her doubt the wisdom of this course. Skobeleff's speech and the rising in the Balkan deepened that doubt into a certainty. When Count Taafe proclaimed that it was necessary for Austria to recognise the historic right of nationalities, the Slavs began to hope for a better future. 'Austria,' said Hegel, 'is not a nation, it is an Empire.' If it is a federated Empire, it may survive; but if it represents the ascendancy of a minority, it is doomed."

Madame Novikoff then passes on to the burning question of Bosnia and the Herzegovina :—

"The occupation of these provinces," she wrote, "was a touchstone of Austrian sincerity, or rather it showed how far she had opened her eyes to facts. Preparations were made to occupy these provinces in 1877, when Count Andrassy was solemnly protesting that such a step was never contemplated by the

Austrian Government. They were occupied under a European Mandate in 1878, and so far the results have not been brilliant.

"Why," she asks, "have they not been brilliant?" She answers: "It is because she turned loose against the unhappy Slavs the dregs of her officials, the Jewish locusts, and her Jesuit agents, that her military expenses in occupied provinces amounted in the year 1882 to £3,000,000."

"Austria," she goes on, went into Bosnia avowedly "to crush the Slavonic serpent." With what results? She quotes a letter from a *Times*' correspondent dated September 29, 1882, who declared: "Turkish law has become a byword in Europe, yet the Bosnians look back upon it almost with regret. This beautiful country is the Botany Bay of Austrian officials." She thus sums up the result of the Austrian occupation up to 1882:—

"Austria has established no popular institutions; she has enforced the conscription at the cost of three millions sterling and much bloodshed. Austrian officials govern with the rigour of martinets and the folly of officials. 'They would shoot us through the head,' said an Austrian officer, referring to the Bosnians, 'at the first opportunity.' And why? Because Austria, disregarding the wise counsel of Count Beust, acted on the sinister suggestions of Lord Beaconsfield, and endeavoured to destroy 'Slavonic preponderance in the occupied provinces.' 'The Servians,' said one of the chief officials, 'are our mortal enemies.' Why? Because the Austrians interfered with their local institutions and attempted to Germanise them with the jackboot and halter. Bosnia and the Herzegovina were, in short, to be governed not for the Bosnians but for the Austrians—that is

to say, for the Germans, and Magyars, and Jews who were dispatched to stamp on the head of the Slavonic serpent and restore order by crushing the strongest aspirations of the people." [1]

In 1882 Madame Novikoff had hoped that Austria had discovered, or was beginning to discover, that M. Tisza's anti-Slavonic policy was treason to Austria:—

"Last year I ventured to say in an English Review the substance of what M. de Kallay is saying to-day. The Government of Vienna-Pesth did me the honour of forbidding the Review containing my article to cross the frontier. Scarcely any copies of it reached Servia."

"No doubt," she charitably remarks, "Austria is timid. She is so artificial a creation that she shrinks from running any risks which might even endanger her existence. But is it no risk to have a hundred thousand men permanently neutralised by the Bosnian blunder, and to have acute observers like Skobeleff and Lord Derby calculating confidently that Austria need not be feared, because most of her troops are Slavs? [2] It was not a Russian but an Austrian newspaper (the *Narodni Listy* of Prague) which addressed

[1] Alas! things seem to be no better to-day. See in the *Fortnightly Review*, December 1908, the splendid articles by "Viator."

[2] Skobeleff said in Paris in 1882:—

"All the risks of a war between Russia and Austria would not be on our side; most of the Austrian troops are Slavs, and they would not be very enthusiastic in opposing the Power that sought the liberation of their brethren."

Lord Derby in his speech on leaving the Beaconsfield Cabinet in 1878 said:—

"There are so many different races in Austria that a single unsuccessful campaign might very possibly break up the Empire. You have a not insignificant Slav population which takes exactly the opposite view to the Magyars, and portions of the Austrian army, distinguished by their Slav nationality, could not be trusted to fight the Russians."

our Emperor as the natural protector of all the Slavs, and implored him to intervene on behalf of the Slavs of Austria as he had intervened on behalf of the Slavs of the Balkan."

During the war of 1877–78 Dr. Rieger, the influential leader of the Bohemian Pan-Slavists, wrote to the Moscow Slavonic Committee :—

"How is it possible that the Bohemian people should not desire from the bottom of its heart the complete success of the Russian arms? Do not the Russians go to battle for right, freedom, religion, for humanitarianism, for the honour of the family which have been long enough insulted on the soil of Christian Europe? The glory of the Russians in that struggle is our glory, and it raises the pride of all Slavonians and their self-consciousness that the blood of our brethren will be shed for our brethren. We cannot but rejoice when the powerful Slavs, by defending the weak Slavs, have earned a right to the gratitude and love of the whole Slavonic family."

It may be interesting to reproduce here a letter from one of Madame Novikoff's numerous correspondents, who in 1882 was a British Vice-Consul in Servia. It is valuable as the estimate of a shrewd and sympathetic observer of the forces, the permanent forces, which govern the situation in the Servian kingdom. King Milan, his son, and his dynasty have passed; the Karageorgevitches have succeeded the Obrenovitches; but the Servian nation remains as one of the permanent elements of the situation. The date of the letter is November 16, 1882 :—

"You have no doubt heard a good deal about the

determined attempt to assassinate King Milan and the motive of that despicable crime. The attempted assassination caused a great sensation throughout the country. Every one says that if it had succeeded a civil war would have broken out, and Austria would have *occupied the country 'till order was restored'*; and the mere possibility of an Austrian occupation seems to terrify all political parties, not excluding that of the present Government, whose leaders seem to be conscious that they have already gone far enough and paid dearly enough for Austrian good relations. I am not one of those who believe that the so-called Progressist party *loves* Austria; on the contrary, its leaders consider, I think, the friendship of Austria a great though, in their view, a *necessary* danger, and one which will ultimately have to be guarded against with the aid of Russia.

"But without reference to Ministerial crises and political intrigues, it is perfectly clear to impartial observers that the Servians as a nation are grateful to Russia for the past, and look to her (perhaps *not* to her Government) to be their friend and 'big sister' in the future. It is of course true that individual Servians are dissatisfied with individual Russians, or even with Russia as a whole; but the great majority of the comparatively few complaints one hears in Servia against Russia are of the kind that younger children sometimes make against the eldest son, whom, however, when he is attacked by strangers, they rally round and defend as though he were infallible. Or one might liken them to lovers' quarrels which a few well-timed words of explanation, or possibly of forgiveness, change into silken chains which only bind the lovers more inseparably together.

"I will only say that my knowledge of history,

such as it is, convinces me that the aspirations of a nation, even when thwarted by the most untoward circumstances, are as a rule ultimately realised, and that I cannot see any reason for making Servia an exception to the rule."

Austria, warned in time, postponed the attempt to realise her ambitions. But the Slavs were still suspicious. Early in 1888 Madame Novikoff had taken up her old line of protest. In an article entitled "Poor Austria," contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* on February 7, 1888, she wrote :—

"The only fear of war that has troubled us ever since 1879 has been the dread that Austria might be encouraged by German support to violate the Treaty of Berlin and press downward to Salonica. This, of course, would be a step which could only result in war. Russia will not, and cannot, tolerate Austria establishing herself as a gaoler of Greek Orthodox Slavonic nationalities from the Danube to the Ægean. If, however, Austria keeps her 'hands off,' there is no ground for war. The mistake of Germany was in allowing Austria to assume a double-faced and hostile attitude in the Balkan Peninsula. Austria's sending the Prince Ferdinand, a Roman Catholic, to Bulgaria, her persistent hostility towards the Greek Orthodox Church, her greed for Slavonic territory, naturally demanded a remonstrance.

"In order to preserve peace, Russia can keep up the Berlin Treaty, but she cannot be expected to modify that Treaty for the worse, and with an obvious danger to the interests of those whose welfare she has and must have at heart."

She followed this up in March by a longer article

entitled, "A Word of Warning and Encouragement." In this she brings out more clearly than ever before the fact that the real ground of hostility to Austria is largely religious. It is not so much Austria against Russia as it is Roman Catholicism *versus* Greek Orthodoxy. She wrote :—

"The really great agent of peace is plain-speaking. I have no authority whatever for using that weapon except my own conscience, and, after all, for personal guidance there is no greater authority in the world. I know, besides, that I am not the only one in Russia who feels that if Austrian soldiers march towards Salonica our soldiers will also undertake an important trip.

"Anybody who hesitates to do his utmost in order to secure peace is a criminal. Not to protest sometimes means to connive at illegality and thus to encourage war. It is less generally recognised, even among our friends, that it is possible for Austria to jeopardise the peace of Europe by other things than by marching through Salonica. Her support of the Prince of Coburg shows her bitter hostility to Russia and to Russia's most vital interests. Russia—it is necessary never to forget—is the Defender of the Faith in these regions. She is the champion of the Orthodox Greek Church in the Balkans just as your Queen Elizabeth was the pillar of the Protestant faith in the Netherlands. We feel just as sore about the political patronage by Austria of the Roman Propaganda in Slavonic Orthodox lands as we do about this threatened advance of her troops beyond the frontier of Bosnia and Herzegovina—sometimes perhaps even more so.

"There is a very remarkable article bearing on this

subject, by Dr. J. Overbeck, in the *Orthodox Catholic Review* (vol. xi., 1888, Trübner), 'The Pope and the Slavonic Nations.' Anybody who really wants to know the dangerous and sinful stratagems of the Roman Church will do well to peruse that paper. It is, indeed, not only a violation of the frontiers settled at Berlin by the white coats of Austria that may endanger peace; the tranquillity of the East may also be sacrificed by the advance of black gowns. Unfortunately, they are already only too busy. In Bosnia the Jesuit is the cherished instrument of Vienna in Austrianising and demoralising the unfortunate Slavs.[1] As my last word, I will recall a famous passage in Slavonic history at once as a warning and encouragement. It was referred to some twenty years ago, when an address was sent from Moscow to the Austrian Russians, or 'Ruthenians,' as they are nicknamed, nobody exactly knows why. Let me quote now a few passages from that document:—

"'When centuries ago (so said our Moscow Slavophiles to their Galician brethren) your famous countryman, Ostaf the Cossack, had been taken prisoner by the Poles, he was tortured to death in the public square. An agonising silence reigned amid the assembled crowd when they saw our heroic compatriot meeting death without uttering a sound. Taras Bulba, his father, quietly gazed upon his mutilated son, encouraging him from time to time with the words, "Well done, my gallant boy; persevere." At last the unfortunate Ostaf looked anxiously around, hoping his eye might rest on one familiar face. What he wanted was to hear and see a brave and courageous man who could

[1] See a remarkable article—"The Power behind the Austrian Throne"—on this subject by Edith Sellers in the *Fortnightly Review*, December 1908.

impart to him the consolations and the spirit of freedom before death. Summoning all his strength, he cried out in a ringing voice, "Father, father! do you hear me?" And there arose a single voice out of the silent multitude, saying, "I hear you." Thus you, our Galician brethren, for five centuries have been trampled underfoot by the enemy of our race, language, and religion. Despising the enemy's swords and daggers, you shout aloud, "We too are Russians! Do you hear us, Russian brethren?" And with one voice we reply, "We hear you! We hear you!"' . . .

"And those words, which Moscow addressed twenty years ago to the victims of Austrian persecution in Galicia, Russia repeats to-day for the consolation of the whole of the oppressed and injured Slavs in Austria or in the Balkans."

Austria, although she refrained from advancing her frontiers, persisted in levying the blood tax and in establishing her authority over the Bosnians. When I was in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1888 I asked General Ignatieff what he thought about it, and chronicled the conversation at the time as follows :—

"General Ignatieff is of opinion that the practical conversion by Austria of her occupation of the Turkish provinces into annexation is equivalent to the nullification of the Berlin Treaty. He holds, therefore, that the Treaty of San Stefano ought to revive the day after the Austrians refuse to retire from Bosnia. As the chief effect of this would be the reappearance of the Big Bulgaria, it may be well to repeat what General Ignatieff said to me on the subject: 'The Bulgaria of San Stefano is only the Bulgaria of the Constantinople Conference with rectifications necessitated by closer

knowledge of the ethnographical and the geographical details. In the Treaty of San Stefano I proposed to construct a Bulgaria that would be homogeneous as regards nationality and religion. I proposed that a mixed commission of Greeks, Servians, Bulgarians, presided over by Russia, should, as a family question, decide what should and what should not be Bulgaria. If a village was Greek, it should go to the Greeks; if it was Bulgarian, to Bulgaria; if Servian, to the Servians. That was for peace and permanence. To bring the frontiers into accord with the ethnological facts.

"'What has been done? Macedonia has been created, and with the strife has come also the strife of religion. The dispute will now never end. The Greeks refuse to recognise the authority of the Bulgarian Exarch outside the limits of Bulgaria; the Bulgarians refuse to submit to any other authority but the Bulgarian. They will never agree. The Greeks deny nationality to the Bulgarian Church outside the Berlin Bulgaria. So the strife goes on.'

"'Well,' said I, 'although it will hardly make for peace to object to Austria remaining in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, what would you do with these provinces?'

"'That is easily settled. Turkish Croatia would go to Dalmatia, as arranged by the Convention of Vienna. The rest of Bosnia would go to Servia, and Herzegovina to Montenegro. That is what I proposed long ago. The people wish not for Austria'"[1]

When, in October 1908, Austria announced the annexation of the provinces of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, in defiance of Treaty obligations, Madame Novikoff was the first and for a time the only person to utter a warning word. Austria was clearly in the

[1] *Truth about Russia*, pp. 287–88.

wrong. For in the Protocol to the Treaty of London in 1871 Austria-Hungary pledged herself, in common with the other Powers, to the following proposition :—

"It is an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting Powers by means of an amicable arrangement."

Madame Novikoff wrote two letters to the *Times* on the subject. In the first she stated the case of the Slavs who had been thus unceremoniously annexed :—

"It is stated so positively that the Austro-Hungarian Government means to take advantage of the present situation that I ask myself, for the sake of argument, supposing it were true, what would be the right thing to do under these circumstances ? To which I reply instantly, The position of Austria-Hungary in Bosnia and Herzegovina is strictly defined and limited by the Treaty of Berlin. If Austria-Hungary wishes to modify that position in any particular, she must appeal to the signatories of the Berlin Treaty for their consent. The question will therefore go before the European Areopagus, which, before coming to a decision, must, in common justice, hear the complaints which the inhabitants of these unhappy provinces have to bring against their pacifiers. What are these complaints ? The Governments of Europe are already in possession of the pathetic petition which the representatives of the Bosnian-Herzegovinese addressed to the plenipotentiaries at the Conference at The Hague. But, although that is the case, I may perhaps be permitted

to reproduce briefly the contents of the petition in question.

"The memorial addressed to the Conference at The Hague was drawn up in the name of emigrants who had fled from the Austrian oppression which had been established in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This memorial was drawn up in the name of the Servian people, and was addressed to the Conference as the most authoritative representative of the idea of peace and justice. The signatories of this historical impeachment of Austrian misrule in Bosnia and Herzegovina declared that 'the Austrian domination is a thousand times more insupportable than that of the Turks.' This, no doubt, is a rhetorical exaggeration, but no one can complain that it is not an adequate expression of the intense exasperation produced in the minds of the Servian people at the way in which their beautiful country has been exploited and oppressed by those whose mandate was limited at Berlin to the pacification of the provinces. The chief point, and one with which every Greek Orthodox must sympathise intensely, is their assertion that the Austrian authorities habitually treat the Greek Orthodox, who form the great majority of the people, with scandalous injustice. They interfere with their religious rites, they seize every opportunity of favouring Roman Catholics, who are thought to be more in sympathy with the authorities. The memorial complains that the Mohammedans are treated with equal injustice, the Greek Orthodox and Mohammedans being united in a brotherhood of suffering at the hands of a persecuting and unjust Government. The Greek Orthodox are kept under constant surveillance by the police, while the Roman Catholics are favoured by every means at the disposal of a Jesuitical Govern-

ment. The richer Moslems have been compelled to flee the country, and on their deserted estates German and Jewish colonies are established. There is no guarantee for personal liberty. The administration is carried on in absolute defiance of modern conceptions of justice. The police make domiciliary visits without any judicial warrant at any hour of the day or night, and never hesitate to shoot the unfortunate peasants who object to the infliction of the worst outrage upon their wives and daughters. Espionage is erected into a Governmental system. Bogus conspiracies are artificially got up in order to get rid of any one whom the Government dislikes. Natives of the country are forbidden to go from one arrondissement to another without police authorisation. In towns a state of siege is proclaimed, and the ill-treatment of the citizens in the streets is quite a normal thing.

"The severest punishments are meted out to any who correspond with Servians in Servia or Montenegro. The provinces are overrun with Jesuits and Jews, and the Austro-Hungarian Government does not hesitate to employ even more disreputable means to demoralise the character and ruin the physique of the unfortunate population committed to their care. The whole administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the hands, not of the natives of the country, but of foreigners. According to the last official statistics, there were 1841 functionaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina: of these only 189, little more than 10 per cent., were Orthodox Servians; 106 were Mussulmans. Of the others, 1546 were foreigners. This locust horde of functionaries are as corrupt as they are inefficient. Hence the bitter discontent and lack of progress on the part of the

population as compared with that of the other provinces freed from the Turkish yoke as the result of the war of 1877. The memorial concluded by a demand in the name of peace and justice that the two provinces should be delivered from the Austrian domination. They demanded, in the name of universal justice, the appointment of a European Commission to inquire into the accuracy of their accusations, which, if justified, they maintain ought to lead to the prompt termination of Austro-Hungarian rule in the provinces which thirty years ago were handed to them to be pacified. The pacification being as complete as the discontent is universal, they claim that the time has come for the termination of the mandate of Austria-Hungary.

"Concerning some of the details of this impeachment I cannot speak, but it has long been known to all Slavs and to all Orthodox that the Austro-Hungarian occupation has been from the first worked with the single aim of crushing Greek Orthodoxy and of destroying the Slav spirit in the occupied provinces. If any change whatever is made in the *status quo*, the Slavonic world would expect that, before the European Powers comply with the request of Austria-Hungary, they will take efficient guarantees against the oppression of the Slavs and the persecution of the Orthodox." [1]

Various correspondents having replied to this indictment by dwelling upon the increased material prosperity of the occupied provinces, Madame Novikoff made a rejoinder as follows :—

"Several of your correspondents — Anglicans,

[1] *The Times*, October 7, 1908.

Romans, and Jews—have hastened to protest against the statement made by the Bosnian refugees in their memorial to The Hague Conference as to the injustice and oppression of the Austrian rule. They say that Austrian rule has increased the material wealth of the provinces, and that is all that anybody can desire. But is it so? Can the whole material world compensate for the loss of our religion, of our souls? What we—the Greek Orthodox—protest against is that the Austrians all these thirty years of their occupation have been persecuting the Greek Church in all its dogmas and manifestations. They have introduced swarms of Jesuits; they are ruining the youth of the country, sapping its moral and physical vitality. It is Prince Metternich and the poor King of Rome over again (everybody knows what that means!). Is the annexation to be granted without any examination into the truth of this indictment, without the inhabitants of these provinces being allowed to be heard by the Conference, without any guarantees being taken that in the annexed provinces the Orthodox Church will be secured against the persecution from which it has suffered during all the time of the occupation? Can this be tolerated?

"I am most of all concerned about the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Are they to be transferred, like a flock of sheep, to the Austrians? Are those men who (please remember) raised the Eastern Question by their revolt in 1875, to be denied an opportunity of being heard before the Areopagus of Europe? Will there not even be a plebiscite taken before their transfer is completed? And, if so, will this plebiscite be a perfectly genuine one? That is the question! I may be told that I am but a *vox clamantis in deserto*, that a single person can do

nothing. But for pronouncing one word only one person is sufficient, no matter how weak, how lonely, how unsupported! At this moment that word is: Beware!"[1]

With which significant word this chapter may fitly close.

[1] *The Times*, October 24, 1908.

MICHAEL LESSAR.
Russian Diplomatist.

CHAPTER IX.

Penjdeh and the Afghan Frontier.

THE third occasion on which Russia and England were on the verge of war in the last half-century was at the beginning of the year 1885. The first occasion was when Lord Palmerston was Premier, in 1864, when the possible *casus belli* was Poland. The second occasion was when the Conservatives were in power under Lord Beaconsfield, in 1878, when the dispute arose over the Eastern Question. On both these occasions there was some plausible pretext, some semblance of a lofty principle to excuse an appeal to arms. It is melancholy to have to admit that, on the third occasion when war was in the air, and the Liberals were in office under Mr. Gladstone, there was absolutely no cause whatever why the delimitation of the Afghan frontier should endanger the peace of the world. It was the very superfluity of naughtiness. When well-meaning philanthropists argue that the nations are now delivered from the risk of war by the growing wisdom of the race, and the demonstrable irrationality of an appeal to the sword, the all-sufficient answer is—Penjdeh. There were not two men in the whole wide world who more sincerely loathed war than Alexander III. and Mr. Gladstone. There were probably not two men in the world who commanded such sincere respect from each other as these two

men. Mr. Gladstone was almost adored in Russia; and although Alexander III. was not well known by the English public, the British Ministers knew him to be a man singularly truthful and above all suspicion of treachery or sharp practice. The Liberal party had come into power after a long electoral campaign in which every Liberal candidate was an anti-Turk, and most of them were honestly in favour of an entente cordiale with Russia. It is impossible to conceive of any arrangement of political forces so admirably calculated to promote harmonious relations as those which existed in St. Petersburg and London at the opening of 1885. Yet before the year was four months old both Powers were arming to the teeth in the expectation of instant war.

This is the more amazing because there was no clash of rival interests. No trade was endangered, no point of vantage at stake. Neither was there any intrinsic difficulty in the question in dispute. England and Russia agreed to delimit the north-west frontier of Afghanistan. Their task was rendered difficult by the quarrel over Penjdeh. But even that aggravation of the local elements of collision did not impair the intrinsic easiness of the problem. The frontier was soon afterwards drawn by mutual consent across the debatable land, and for more than twenty years there has not been a single breach of peace on either side of the frontier line.

To add to the antecedent incredibility of war, there was the almost unprecedented circumstance that the combatants were unable to get at each other in the territory which gave rise to the *casus belli*. Wars have often broken out when armed forces massed on either side of a geographical frontier have come into unintended collision; but the northern frontier

of Afghanistan was literally inaccessible to British troops. The Ameer, in whose interest we were supposed to be threatening war against the Russians, would himself have become our enemy if we had insisted upon crossing his country to defend his frontier against a Russian attack.

There was no popular agitation in favour of war in either country. England was absorbed in the tragic fate of General Gordon and the incalculable consequences of the loss of Khartoum. In Russia there was an almost universal desire to do nothing to endanger the position or to add to the difficulties of Mr. Gladstone. Yet notwithstanding all these influences making for peace, and the absence of any powerful interests hankering for war, England and Russia were within an ace of going to war with each other in 1885. But even that is less marvellous than that there was practically no popular opposition to the war in either country. No one wanted it, but no one would oppose it.

I ought not to have said no one. For there was one person who opposed it in Russia, and another, her old ally and comrade, who opposed it in England. But we were each in our own country an *Athanasius contra mundum*. In the English Cabinet there was one minister who ventured to withstand Mr. Gladstone and all the rest of his colleagues. That minister was Mr. Chamberlain, and the fact deserves to be remembered to him for righteousness. But no one outside the Cabinet knew of Mr. Chamberlain's "unpatriotic" opposition to the war policy of Mr. Gladstone. In England the whole of the Press, Liberal and Conservative, with the solitary exception of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, supported Mr. Gladstone in menacing Russia with war. In Russia the Press was

almost as bad. The *Moscow Gazette* opened its columns to Madame Novikoff's plea for patience and peace. But M. Katkoff himself regarded her as a visionary, and his readers resented her appeals as little short of treason.[1]

There was more excuse for the Russians. For we are now sufficiently far removed from the fret and fury of that troublous time to see that in the vital essence and marrow of that controversy the British were absolutely in the wrong. Yet it was on behalf of that utterly indefensible case, in a quarrel deliberately provoked by British officers, whose action can only be described as unpardonable bad faith, that England, under Mr. Gladstone, threatened to go to war by sea and land all round the world with the Russian Empire, knowing perfectly well that, whether victorious or defeated, the war could only be disastrous to Great Britain. Never was there a madder and more criminal war threatened in our time; and yet, with the exception of Mr. Chamberlain in the Cabinet, Madame Novikoff in Russia, as far as we know, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the whole globular mass of the Russian and British nations resigned themselves more or less apathetically to their doom. The Christian Church was silent. Not

[1] Having been a great friend of Katkoff, Madame Novikoff induced that notable editor to allow her to contribute to the *Moscow Gazette* an ardent appeal to her own countrymen in favour of the Anglo-Russian Alliance. Even during the Penjdeh incident Madame Novikoff wrote enthusiastic praises of the best representatives of England, and seemed to ignore the very semblance of unpleasantness between the two countries she wished to unite by ties of standing affection. An old lady called on her the day that her article had appeared. "What do you say to Katkoff's article of this morning?" exclaimed she, greatly indignant. "He is now publishing things which could only be suggested by an English agent. Is he not ashamed of himself? Who is that O. K.? *C'est révoltant*," concluded she.

a single public meeting was held in either country to protest against an absolutely useless and quite unnecessary war. The suggestion put forward by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, that the question in dispute should be sent to arbitration, was fiercely repudiated even by the *Daily News*, which in those days led its bellowing brethren of the provincial Press in its new masquerade of a demented Jingo.

The controversy which brought us to the verge of war is now long ago forgotten. It concerned a fifty miles' strip of more or less barren steppe land lying on the extreme north-west frontier of Afghanistan. The salient points of the dispute were set forth under the following six heads by the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 26, 1885, accompanied with a defiant challenge to any one to disprove their accuracy :—

"We challenge our contemporaries, before they write another word that can be construed as a menace of war, to dispose of the following thesis, which, if not overthrown, will saddle upon England, if peace should be broken, all the guilt and crime of an unjust war :—

"1. That Russia and England agreed in May to refer the whole question of what was Afghan and what was not Afghan on the north-west frontier to the decision of a Joint Commission.

"2. That in the whole of the debatable or debated land there were few points the Afghan title to which was more disputed than Penjdeh.

"3. That the question whether Penjdeh was Afghan or was not Afghan was specially mentioned in the instructions of Sir Peter Lumsden as one upon which the Joint Commission had to adjudicate ; and, further, that Sir Peter Lumsden had full authority, if he thought fit, to assign Penjdeh to Russia.

"4. That when the agreement with Russia was arrived at there were no Afghans or Russians in any part of the debatable land, the nearest Afghans being at Bala Murghab and the nearest Russians at Sarakhs.

"5. That while Russia and England were making the final arrangements for the dispatch of the Joint Commission that was to settle the ownership of all the disputed territories, the Afghans suddenly seized Penjdeh in June, and have held it ever since.

"6. That the Russians protested; but as England did not recall the Afghans, Russia in October replied by sending a small force on to Pul-i-khatun, and held back her Commissioner until an understanding had been arrived at that would put a stop to such high-handed appropriation of the territories which were *sub judice*.

"That is the thesis which we challenge all those who are denouncing Russia's conduct in this matter to answer before they venture to say another word in advocacy of war."

To make the story complete, it is only necessary to add that after the Afghans had occupied Penjdeh in the debatable land, the Russians retaliated by occupying Zulficar, and that as a consequence the English Press clamoured loudly for war. The situation seemed serious in March; it seemed hopeless in April. For on March 30 General Komaroff had fallen upon the Afghan army that had seized Penjdeh in the previous June, and drove them in headlong rout out of the position. The Afghans lost 500 men, their camp, and all their supplies. When that news reached London, Mr. Gladstone, in the most melodramatic fashion, arraigned the conduct of Russia, and every-

body believed that war was imminent. A war vote was passed of £11,000,000, and the Admiralty received instructions to prepare the fleet for immediate war with Russia and with France—so, at least, Sir Cooper Key, then First Sea Lord, told Hobart Pasha, who forthwith in high glee brought the news to me at the *Pall Mall Gazette* office in Northumberland Street. To clear the decks for the threatened war, it was decided to scuttle from the Soudan, and leave the unfortunate garrisons to their doom, a decision which cost the lives, first and last, according to Lord Cromer's calculations, of seven millions of human beings.

The eleven-million war vote was promised on April 21; but on May 4 Mr. Gladstone announced that the impediment to a friendly correspondence with Russia had been removed, and that the two Governments had agreed to refer any difference which might be found to exist to the judgment of a Sovereign of a friendly State. The next day it was announced that Sir Peter Lumsden had been recalled, and that all danger of war was at an end. The sudden collapse of the whole fantastic and criminal business was wonderful. It was due to the belated discovery that the Ameer of Afghanistan, in whose interests we were making all the hubbub, did not attach the slightest importance to the uninhabited territory in dispute, and that, further, he would on no consideration whatever allow British troops to cross Afghanistan for the purpose of fighting Russia in Central Asia. The ludicrous absurdity of being more Afghan than the Afghans about a disputed strip of territory, and then being confronted with the imminent certainty that the Afghans would fight us rather than allow us to fight for their frontier, at last penetrated the heads of the British Ministers, and they saved their face as best they

could by proposing to call in a friendly Sovereign as referee.

I shall never forget those exciting months. Gordon had just died at Khartoum. Public opinion was violently excited against Mr. Gladstone—not altogether without cause—although the real culprit was not he but another. The prevailing feeling on the Government side was that, after the humiliation at Khartoum, Ministers simply dare not face another humiliation in Central Asia. The facts were, as usual, carefully suppressed or misrepresented, with the result that, if it had not been for the patience of the Russian Government and the dogged good sense of the Ameer, the world would have witnessed the scandal of a war declared by Mr. Gladstone, with Turkish allies, against Russia in the hope that the blood shed in Central Asia might be healing balm to the prestige so cruelly injured in the Soudan. After such an experience, let no one ever count with confidence upon common sense, Christianity, or the imperious voice of material interest being able to restrain nations from going to war. If Mr. Gladstone and all the peace-loving people of Great Britain could persuade themselves in 1885 that war with Russia over the Afghan frontier was an imperious national duty demanded by the national honour, there is obviously no security that some subsequent Prime Minister may not fall a prey to the same temporary delirium.

In those days the *Pall Mall Gazette* was regarded as the solitary Russian outpost in England. Then, as in 1877–78, I worked hand and glove with Madame Novikoff in the interests of peace. The fact that there was at least one English journal vigorously maintaining the Russian cause in the capital of Great Britain helped somewhat to allay the bitter feeling in St. Petersburg

and Moscow. By letter and telegram we interchanged the information needed by each for combating the madness of the moment. Our common watchword, which we sounded fearlessly in the midst of the turmoil, was the Anglo-Russian Alliance.

"Russia and England," I wrote in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the very day General Komaroff was clearing the Afghans out of Penjdeh, "have got to keep common house in Asia. Divorce is impossible. The solution of the Central Asian question can only be found in an Anglo-Russian Alliance; it will only be rendered infinitely more costly and difficult by an Anglo-Russian war." I warned the Government that "Ministers will make the greatest of mistakes if they allow our bellowing brethren to induce them to believe that a war with Russia would be popular. A war about a worthless ribbon of sand, in which no Afghan dwells, and the fate of which might be decided by arbitration; a war avowedly contemplated as a way of getting out of the comparatively trivial trouble in the Soudan, would be resented by the nation as an inexpiable crime against humanity, against civilisation, and against England."

"It is no use, my dear Stead," said Hobart Pasha as he sat down in the easy-chair in the *Pall Mall* sanctum. "You are all alone. There is not a paper, not a politician who is not against you. You are beaten this time. In a few days I shall be off to Constantinople to arrange for the passage of the British fleet through the Bosphorus into the Black Sea. You've made a good fight, but the game's up."

"It looks bad, I admit," I said, "but there will be no war. You'll see there'll be no war. The Russians are playing straight. We are in the wrong, and we'll pull it off all right."

I went round to M. Lessar, the ablest diplomatist

Russia has had in her service in our time, and discussed with him the chances of peace and war. So it went on day after day: the Turkish Hobart playing all he knew to force on war, in which the Sultan might gain his revenge for the loss of Bulgaria; M. Lessar cool, imperturbable, immovable, knowing all his facts, and determined to give the English no excuse for rushing into war. At last, one fine morning at the beginning of May, Hobart Pasha said to me, "I've come to bid you good-bye. You've pulled it off after all, and I never thought you would. I am beaten, but I congratulate you on your success against all the odds. But now," he added, "I'm going back to Constantinople to tell the Turks to throw themselves into the arms of the Russians. The English are no good for them any more. Good-bye." It was the last I ever saw of Hobart Pasha, a bluff, straightforward sailor, whom many of us would gladly have sent to prison for the help he gave the Turks during the war of 1877–78.

Madame Novikoff kept me well posted both concerning the state of Russian opinion and of the views of the Russian Government.

The basis for English complaints was that although the Russian Commissioner, General Zelenoi, had been ordered to meet Sir Peter Lumsden, the British Commissioner, at the frontier on October 13, before that date it was announced that he was ill and could not arrive till February. Sir Peter Lumsden himself did not arrive till November 19. The Afghans, at the instigation of the British officers on the spot, occupied Penjdeh in June. The Russians, irritated at this attempt to forestall the decision of the Commissioners, occupied other points of vantage on the debatable land. Much outcry arising over

this, the Russian Government decided that, after what had occurred, it would be unwise to proceed with the delimitation on the spot. It would be wiser to settle by direct negotiations in London whether the frontier should be drawn solely on geographical or on mixed geographical and ethnographical principles. This modification of the original scheme, justified by the events that had taken place during General Zelenoi's illness, was obvious common sense. Unless the principles of the delimitation were settled, the rival Commissioners would have been at a deadlock in a week. The Russian Government sent M. Lessar to London to negotiate at headquarters. Upon the illness of General Zelenoi, and the subsequent modification of the arrangements entailed by the mission of M. Lessar to London, rested the accusation of bad faith against the Russian Government which was repeated by Lord Fitzmaurice in his *Life of Lord Granville*.[1] The inference which inveterate prejudice and malevolent suspicion drew from these simple facts was that the Russian Government wished either to provoke a rupture or to seize the greater part of the disputed territory while negotiations were proceeding. The fact that the first seizure of any of the disputed territory was made by the Afghans at British instigation was conveniently ignored in London. But upon that point the whole controversy hangs.

Madame Novikoff on February 19 sent me a description of an interview which she had had "with one who is of the highest authority on all matters relating to the foreign policy of the Empire." This interview, which was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 24, set out with extreme brevity and lucidity the Russian case. Madame Novikoff

[1] Vol. ii. p. 424.

asked her authority to tell her the exact truth about the alleged advance of Russian troops in the disputed territory. He replied :—

"Sir Peter Lumsden has taken with him two or three young fellows like Mr. Stephen, who speak Russian and who imagine that they serve their cause or the cause of England by inciting the Afghans to occupy positions far in advance of their own frontier. The Afghans, acting under the instigation of these young Englishmen, occupied a position at Penjdeh in territory which had never been under Afghan rule. Our military people, hearing and seeing everywhere evidence of English hostility and English intrigues, immediately responded to the Afghan advance by a further advance on their own account, and they went farther than was either prudent or useful. Thus a mistake was made on both sides, but the initiative was taken by the English."

If Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville would but have taken the trouble to read Madame Novikoff's report, and had taken the further pains of inquiring into the truth of the matter, all the subsequent trouble would have been averted. For if inquiry had been made then, it would have been discovered, what is now no longer in dispute, that the initiative was taken by the Afghans at the direct instigation of Mr. Condie Stephen and Captain Yate.

When I was received in 1888 by the Emperor Alexander III., who was the most truthful of men, I referred to the Penjdeh trouble as an instance of the risk of collision between Russia and England. The Tsar interrupted me with the remark: "But that was entirely England's doing. Your officers pushed the

Afghans into Penjdeh." In reporting the Emperor's remarks to Sir Robert Morier, I asked if this was really true. Sir Robert Morier replied at once: "The Emperor was quite right. Our officers admitted that they had done it. It was all our fault." Sir Robert Morier was not a man to give away his countrymen, but he felt, and felt rightly, that their action had sullied the honour of England and was utterly indefensible. After urging the Afghans to occupy Penjdeh, when the Russians advanced to the attack, our officers, although "eager for the fray," protested to Heaven that they were "hampered by the ineptitude of the Government at home." That these young officers were not provided with lodgings in the Tower for the rest of their natural lives may perhaps be held to justify the accusation of "ineptitude" which they brought against the Government at home. If these central facts are borne well in mind, it will not be difficult to sympathise with the intense irritation which pervades the following extracts from Madame Novikoff's letters from Moscow :—

"*Friday, March* 22.

"I can hardly hope that the frontier question will be settled amicably if the Russians are asked by Dufferin or his Master the Ameer to withdraw. I am distressed to think of a rupture between Russia and England, so is my brother. But will you believe it, all the others—Katkoff, Aksakoff, and the rest—are anything but horrified at 'giving England a lesson.' . . . It is terrible! But English Society is so very ignorant they take every penny newspaper for the very Bible of wisdom, and repeat word for word all they read in the morning. If it were not for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, I don't know where we should be now in

our hatred of England. Its voice has really done no end of good."

Among the delusions of that mad time was the story that the Russians were bent upon seizing Herat :—

"Moscow, *Sunday*,
March 29/17, 1885.

"I went to church this morning, or rather, to Prince Dolgorouki's private chapel. The Governor-General very amiable, and very puzzled about the warlike tone of the English Press: 'It is incredible that they should actually suppose we want Afghanistan, and especially Herat.' I am just returning from St. Petersburg, where I saw General Tchernayeff —and he, even he, deprecates the very idea of seizing Herat. We could never hold it,' concluded Tchernayeff. The idea of being at war is to me perfectly distressing. Your pamphlet is admirable.[1] Oh, how terrible if there should be war between Russia and England! All our eight years' work—lost! Utterly lost! And what a struggle that will be. . . . God bless you for your efforts!"

"Moscow, *March* 30/18, 1885.

"I wrote an article on Lessar for the *Moscow Gazette*, and half of it was a bitter protest against the stupidity of our people for not breaking off all negotiations the moment the Afghans took hold of Penjdeh in June. Here was Russia's blunder. Katkoff took out that paragraph. It seems, according to an explanation I had this morning, our people hoped to settle that *à l'amiable*, without allowing the Russian public to get indignant with England. How stupid!

[1] A *Pall Mall* Extra entitled, "Fight or Arbitrate? How should we settle the Afghan Frontier?"

"You startle me in saying that Zelenoi has not been seriously ill. I heard about that illness from several quarters at St. Petersburg, and remember Staal distinctly saying, 'Giers is angry with my (Staal's) scepticism about Zelenoi's illness.' I am so wretched about this unexpected quarrel. Yes—our honest, energetic eight years' work seems to be on the point of being torn to pieces! It is terrible!

"I am true with all my soul to the Russo-English Alliance, but your stupid Press is wrong in bullying the Russians too often. If it were not for the *P.M.G.* I really do not know how far they would have gone here in their indignation!"

She writes on April 2, 1885:—

"Is it not marvellous? Is it not exactly what you guessed in your leader of March 28? It was because our stupid people did not like to admit bad faith on the part of our beloved Gladstone that they did not openly protest at the English intrigues at Penjdeh and were glad Zelenoi's illness delayed the immediate departure of the latter. But he would have been on his way before he fell ill had it not been for that diabolical step which brings us to the verge of war! We were stupid in being too devoted to Gladstone. That is the real and ridiculous truth! Is it possible that our eight years' work is to be lost? Is it not discouraging? Is it not horrible? And the Duke of Argyll, who for years has been such a fair statesman, seems to be as bad as the others. I feel very wretched and disgusted. It will be a monstrous war, unless you can stop it. God help you!"

Writing later in the day, she adds this personal note:—

"The Emperor is evidently also not displeased with my work in England, because my husband has just been appointed as General-Lieutenant, which means the third class (out of the fourteen)—a considerable distinction, as you see. I must thank you heartily with all my soul for all you have done for the grand cause."

The next letter sounds a note of menace :—

"Moscow, *April* 3, 1885.

"The feeling of *bitterness* is very strong. The plan is—to answer English words by Russian deeds; and since the calling of your reserves is a fact, certain orders to the same effect have been sent out here.

"To me the whole situation is now *worse than ever*, and I feel very, very wretched."

"*Easter Tuesday, April* 7, 1885.

"The *Moscow Gazette* of this morning calls you 'the awakener of English conscience,' and reproduces *in extenso* your challenge. Have I not good reason for being delighted ?

"When I reproach Russians with want of energy in not having loudly protested at the occupation of Penjdeh, I invariably hear: 'It was dangerous to do so—as it might have embarrassed Gladstone. We hoped to succeed without risking that, and advanced only when we found out that he was unable to retract the false step of his colleagues.' "

The following brief letter was written after General Komaroff had cleared the Afghans out of Penjdeh :—

"Moscow, *Saturday*,
March 31, 1885.

"Our Foreign Office object to my mentioning a very important and positive fact, which our Govern-

LIEUT.-GEN. IVAN NOVIKOFF.
Curator of the University of St. Petersburg.

ment want to conceal out *of deference* (!!!!) to Sir Edw. Thornton and Gladstone, viz. that the Afghan attack has been all directed and commanded by English officers. Now, tell me: why should such facts remain concealed? Is it not idiotic?

"The refusal of the Afghans to allow English troops to cross their country is angelic. People here are extremely amused with it. Some persons grumble that Komaroff, after punishing the Afghans and delivering Penjdeh of the presence of the invaders, left it himself. *I* think he has only done his duty and proved his good faith. *Jamais assez*, as far as that goes."

"Moscow, *April* 5/17, 1885.

"But why has Lord Dufferin been making a fool of himself? Why did he make such a mischievous and false speech at Lahore describing the Komaroff incident as an aggressive and unprovoked step taken by the Russians? He knows that is not true. People here (including *Moscow Gazette*) are indignant. It is England who invents pretences for gaining time; we are ready. It is England who has been threatening and insulting us; 'we kept our word—we have not been sending and instigating agents wherever we could.'

"Russians are now quite eager to punish England for all her insults; and I—poor I—I feel very miserable and disheartened.

"People call you here 'the only honest Englishman, the one who alone may save England from disgrace and folly.' Your name begins to be most popular here. I feel proud, so very proud, when I think of your work."

"*April* 10/22.

"I have been very busy trying to calm Katkoff

and the others, who are as indignant with the English Press as they can be."

"Moscow, *April* 16/28, 1885.

"Oh, what a time I have had and still have! The absurd threats and braggadocio of the English Press are beginning to produce now their fatal effect. But how could Gladstone be mad enough to ask the Russian Government to recall Komaroff, or to blame him for doing his elementary duty? Oh, it is terrible! but the diabolical quarrel seems almost certain now.

"'A Great Power cannot patiently receive slaps in the face in order to please English journalists who find it advantageous to play that game,' is the reply I get from people who seem cool-headed and moderate. 'But we have no money, no trade,' I sometimes suggest, like a wise, practical *materfamilias*. 'Oh, that does not matter in the least. The spirit of the country must be lofty—it's the first characteristic of every great nation which has a great future. . . .' Well, of course, that is true, but I am wretched, very wretched."

"*April* 18/30, 1885.

"Oh, how low-spirited I am, how distressed! Almost everybody thinks that England is insulting us through Dufferin and Lumsden as well as through the English Press because she knows how anxious we are to preserve peace. Her present object is to gain time in order to use advantageously for war purposes the grant of eleven millions. I feel wretched, and am repeating that we are now paying for our Berlin mistakes. The English Press has grown accustomed to the idea that Russia could be cowed and threatened without resenting it. But Russians say I am wrong, and that we ought to prove that

war is not dreaded now. Just the opposite. We cannot seize India, but we can do no end of harm to England, and reduce her to the position of a second-rate Power. Oh, it is all very horrible, I assure you! It is true, England has lost a good bit of her prestige, but fancy what a power—what an unprecedented power—Russia and England would represent if, instead of quarrelling in the eyes of the heathen world, they became *strong allies and friends*! Why can that not be done? How can Gladstone indulge in absurd attacks, and accuse Komaroff, whose character is one of the best we have?"

Telegram from Moscow.

"*April* 30, 1885.

"To STEAD, *Pall Mall Gazette* Office, London.

"Distressed. Telegraph impressions.

"NOVIKOFF."

Reply.

"Peace certain if civil explanations amplified.

"STEAD."

Then came the glad revulsion of feeling when the danger was passed:—

"I take off my hat to you. Well fought, well fought indeed, dear friend! The victory is yours. The esteem of all the honest hearts is deeper than ever!"

M. Katkoff, who had been very sceptical concerning the possibility of any pacific arrangement, made a very handsome amende in a leading article when the settlement was arrived at by emphatically complimenting Madame Novikoff upon her foresight and

courage in opposing almost alone the universal pessimism. This acknowledgment naturally made a considerable stir.

After the storm had passed, Madame Novikoff had a new cause for distress in the news of the impending fall of the Gladstone Cabinet, which did not take place till June 6. She was also upset by the rumours concerning the fortification of Herat :—

"St. Petersburg, *Tuesday*,
May 14/26, 1885.

"I am tired physically but pleased morally, and grateful to you for your splendid energy and work; but I am distressed to think that Gladstone is seriously thinking of resigning. It is a true misfortune."

"St. Petersburg, *May* 17/29, 1885.

"Gen. Tchernayeff paid me a long visit. He disapproved so openly not only the occupation of Penjdeh, but even of that of Merv, that his protesting attitude cost him his governorship of Tashkent. 'Merv is a wretched village, good for nothing.' 'What we want,' he added, 'is not to be in the power of these savage tribes. Let England take Afghanistan, if she may! The nearer neighbours we are with England the nearer we approach the *Anglo-Russian Alliance*, the only thing really important for both of us to establish in Central Asia. Russia and England would regain their prestige only when the world realised that alliance. It is very foolish and wicked of England to arm Herat and give us a more dangerous and troublesome neighbour than the Afghans were already. It is a stroke of policy on the part of England unworthy of the present English Cabinet. The

Afghans are bad and troublesome enough already. I know them well!'

"The effect of Gladstone's retirement would be perfectly disastrous. *Nobody is trusted and honoured here* half as much as he—it is really wonderful the way in which everybody worships him. The German Military Attaché told me that even when Gordon's death became known the sorrow was very deep amongst the Russians, 'much deeper,' he added, 'than amongst some Englishmen I know. Even then they would not blame Gladstone, but his depending upon the other members of the Cabinet as a constitutional minister.' Did I not tell you almost the same thing? It would be a very terrible blow if a man who at all events is not a liar and a mischief-maker were to go away.

"Who suggested the fortification of Herat, I wonder? It is worse than to occupy Penjdeh by the Afghans. Sir Robert Morier's arrival here is dreaded, but again people suppose Gladstone had nothing to do with so hostile and dangerous an appointment. Bismarck refused him point-blank. I do not see why Russia has not done the same. Russia is always too kind-hearted and . . . a little silly!"

"*Saturday, May* 30/18, 1885.

"Dined with Zinovieff,[1] who said he expected every minute to learn from Staal that the Protocol is signed.

"*I:* 'Protocol, why not convention?'

"*He:* 'Because we want this Afghan difficulty finally closed as soon as we can. Unfortunately, we shall have to raise a protest—probably soon. England

[1] Now Ambassador at Constantinople, then head of Asiatic Department at the Foreign Office.

cannot give up her unfair tricks. Instead of being honestly united with us, instead of representing a compact power of Russia and England in the eyes of the Asiatic tribes, England is now arming Herat against us. Is that a way to secure friendly terms with us? Sir Edw. Thornton said, half-seriously, half as a joke, last time I saw him: "The really peaceful arrangement would be to divide Afghanistan between England and Russia." I left that passing remark unnoticed. English people are desperately indiscreet. They print anything you tell them privately. ("Not all, not all," exclaims O. K.) Well, I am now studying their last Blue Book—it is sometimes very indiscreet. They make omissions, and if they do not make additions the omissions have the same effect as if they altered the sense in adding the unsaid things.'

"*I:* 'But why does M. de Giers talk of a military party? You know we have no parties.'

"*He:* 'I do not know the exact terms actually used. M. de Giers wanted to designate a disposition amongst us and a force of resistance which is roused when the national feeling is wounded. In times of national trial the whole country becomes one military party.'

"*Z.* begged me to ask anything I want to know. He is quite willing to show me the whole collection of the documents concerning these questions the next time I visit him."

I need not multiply extracts. These letters will suffice to illustrate how the madness of one nation reacts upon the other, how each is certain the other is acting with bad faith, and how, when once the cry of national honour is raised, all other considerations go by the board.

When the storm was over, and Mr. Gladstone had quitted office, Madame Novikoff wrote, sending him, with her condolences, a copy of the tribute paid to him by the *Journal de St. Petersburg* and M. Le Play's book.

The following letters from Mr. Gladstone resulted :—

"DOLLES HILL, KILBURN, N.W.,
July 1, 1885.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—Difficult as I should find it to write to you at this time on politics, I must not omit to thank you for your kindness in sending me the too favourable and indulgent article from the *Journal de St. Petersburg*, and also for your proposal to send me a work of which I had not heard, but which I shall gladly accept from you.

"I left office happy in many respects as to the condition of affairs ; but I should have been happier if the correspondence on the Afghan frontier had then reached the conclusion which shortly before there seemed to be little reason to expect.

"My countrymen are just now overlooking in me many defects, as they are commonly given to compassion for the fallen. There is the daily growing defect of age, which is asserting itself from day to day in ways better known to me than to any over-partial judges.—Believe me, with many thanks, most faithfully yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

"10 DOWNING STREET,
WHITEHALL, *July* 7, 1884.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I thank you for your interesting note and its enclosure. I am tempted to envy especially your non-political pursuits and

opportunities.—Accept my kind regards, and believe me sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

"LONDON, *July* 31, 1885.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I have thus far simply thanked you for your kindness in sending me the work of Le Play. I was hardly prepared for so remarkable a work as, having now crossed the threshold of it, I find that it appears to be. It seems to have all the indefatigable assiduity of the German manner together with the point and verve of the French. Such an amount of careful social observation I do not recollect to have seen for a long time. I like his regard for settled custom and authority, as against the notions of those who at a moment's notice are ready to reconstruct States, Monarchies, and Society at large. I am, however, very curious to see how he will make good his case on behalf of the *ancien régime* in France. He seems to hold almost that there was no great practical mischief in France beyond monarchical centralisation and the non-evidence of the *Noblesse de la Cour*, with the attendant neglect of all proprietary duties. This is a little difficult to believe, and I should like to hear what Tocqueville would say were he still among us. I fully believe, however, in the redeeming effect of local self-government; and no one, I suppose, can deny that Revolutions have in some points failed to cure and in some others may even have aggravated the evils of France. But she is and she must be a very great country.

"I have not yet discovered what is M. Le Play's personal position in regard to religion. But even at this early stage I am inclined to feel a very great respect for him.

"I am sorry not to perceive the signs of progress in

the negotiations between our two countries. You know my accustomed freedom of observation on my own, and I do not think you have known me as censorious or niggardly in speaking about the conduct of Russia or of other countries. But I am looking with anxiety to see the compact of Penjdeh *versus* Zulficar carried into effect in a manner complete.

"At present I am nearly in the condition of Zacharias before the birth of St. John, my speech being limited to the *strict necessaries*, all public speaking forbidden, and the throat under daily treatment. In the end of next week I hope to go to sea. Again I pray you to accept my thanks, and believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

It would be wrong to conclude this chapter without making at least a passing reference to the inestimable services which M. Lessar rendered to the cause of peace. He was a young and comparatively unknown engineer when he was sent to London in 1885 to settle the principles upon which the frontier should be drawn. He spoke English very imperfectly, but his skill, his straightforwardness, his complete mastery of the subject, and his perfect temper, made him an almost ideal instrument for the negotiations he carried through with complete success. He knew his facts. He had been over every inch of the ground in dispute. He never lost his head or left you in the lurch for a fact or for an argument. He shrugged his shoulders now and then over what seemed to him the almost inconceivable stupidity of those with whom we were contending; but on the whole he was cheery and good-humoured, and in the end he pulled things through and succeeded in

securing the signature of the Anglo-Russian Protocol of September 10, 1885, which has assured unbroken peace along the frontier ever since.

After the signature of the Anglo-Russian Protocol of 1885, which laid down the principles on which the Afghan frontier was to be delimited on the spot, M. Lessar was selected by his Government to join the Commission, with Count Kuhlberg as the chief Russian representative and Sir West Ridgeway as the chief British Commissioner. Here again his industry and his knowledge made him indispensable. Many years afterwards he referred to this Commission as an instance of the way in which he had always got on with the English. He said :—

"Looking at my record from the very first, I have always got on well, and have never had disagreeable frictions with the English. Of course there have been oppositions of policy, but, so far as I am personally concerned with the negotiations, they have gone smoothly. I do not insist upon small things and personal things—they are of no importance ; but when it is a question of principle, it is much better to carry out a clear principle than to make stupid compromises which will not work. For instance, on the Afghan frontier, when once it was decided to draw the line, it was much better to put all the Sarakhs Turcomans on one side or on the other. So I insisted upon this. The other idea was to run a dividing line between them as a compromise. I got my way, and the result is that for seventeen years there has been profound peace along the frontier."

Lord Fitzmaurice, in his *Life of Lord Granville*, suggests and indeed asserts that the trouble in Penjdeh was of Prince Bismarck's making. It certainly suc-

ceeded in securing for Germany half of New Guinea. But in view of this opinion, which curiously resembles General Ignatieff's theory of the origin of the Balkan troubles, I venture to quote the following notes of a very interesting conversation I had with M. Lessar in 1899, in which he set forth a philosophic theory as to the need for good relations between England and Russia, admirably illustrated by a Persian story which embodies in a parable the root principle of the foreign policy of all States.

M. Lessar said to me :—

" What strikes me always about Anglophobia and Russophobia is the insanity of it. No doubt we shall fight you some time. All nations fight, and always will fight, but it is absurd to fight prematurely. If history teaches anything, it shows that nations fight with those which are their closest rivals. It is the man who is treading on your heels whom you kick, not the man who is a mile in the rear. The latter may be a worse man and a worse enemy—when he gets up to you ; but till then you leave him alone. Now, Russia is economically and politically a hundred years behind England. In a century's time she may have caught you up, but the notion of an Anglo-Russian war now is a mere *bêtise*. The nations whom you will fight in the near future are Germany and the United States. They are the neck-and-neck rivals of England. Sooner or later they will strike at your supremacy on the sea, and how absurd you will look if you have broken your teeth and wasted your resources on Russia—poor Russia, who for a century to come asks for nothing but to develop her resources and make up leeway."

It was just when the Boer War was on the verge of breaking out, and I wanted to know, from one

whom I could trust to tell me the bottom truth of what was in his heart, whether there was any likelihood of foreign complications arising during the war. I put the question to him straight :—

"Do you or do you not wish to see England destroyed as a great Power ? I admit we have treated you abominably. We are going to be tied up helpless for a long time by this infernal war. If Russia really desires to destroy us, she will never have a better chance. What I want to know is whether, now that our rulers have delivered the British Empire over as a sheep to the knife of the butcher, Russia would like to see our throat cut ?"

I was speaking long before the dreary, dreadful months in which the United Kingdom was left defenceless, without even a cartridge in her arsenals ; but I felt so certain that, as we had gone into an unjust war with a lie in our right hand, the Lord of Hosts would give us a particularly bad time before the war was over. And He did.

M. Lessar paused for a while before he replied. Then he said gravely :—

"No. I do not wish England to be destroyed. She has been, and no doubt will continue to be, as disagreeable as she possibly can be to Russia ; and many a time, in our irritation at the wanton way in which she opposes us from sheer *schadenfreude*, we could wish her humiliated. But destroyed ! No ; that is another matter. I do not think it is Russia's interest that England should be destroyed."

"Then," I said, "don't you think you might help us to avert the war ? A timely reminder of the possibility of other outstanding questions coming up for settlement might recall our infatuated idiots to a sense of their responsibilities."

M. Lessar shook his head.

"No," he said, "it would be too dangerous. Besides, what interest have we in saving your people from this war? England is not going to be any stronger as the result of this adventure."

My friend spoke with a slight cynical smile; but he spoke the truth. For three years at least England was effaced from international politics.

"But you said you did not wish England destroyed," I remonstrated.

"Destroyed! Certainly not. But if she voluntarily wishes to diminish her fighting value, it is not for Russia to complain. We have no responsibility for the war; we can profit by its results with a clear conscience. But let me tell you a story which will, I think, explain the Russian point of view better than anything else. When Zinovieff was Russian Minister at Teheran, Skobeleff captured Geok Tepe and destroyed the power of the Tekke Turkomans. By this operation the Russian frontier became conterminous with that of Persia. The Shah and his ministers were much alarmed, and M. Zinovieff waited upon the Grand Vizier to endeavour to point out to him how unfounded were the fears of the Persians.

"M. Zinovieff had composed an eloquent little speech, in which he pointed out the absurdity of the alarms of the Persians. Russia was Persia's very good friend and ally. As for these Tekke Turkomans, they had been for ages the most pestilent crew of marauders, slave-dealers, and brigands. Never before had Persia enjoyed such peace on her northern frontier as since Skobeleff's campaign. Formerly, every year one or more expeditions had to be dispatched across the frontier to reclaim captives or to inflict vengeance on the raiders. Now all was peace. There were no more

raids, therefore no more expeditions. The Persian peasant slept in peace on the frontier, and the Persian treasury was relieved of a heavy annual expenditure. Why, then, should the Grand Vizier not rejoice over the fortunate turn taken by circumstances which had brought about such excellent results for Persia ?

" The Grand Vizier listened with profound attention. When M. Zinovieff ceased, he replied : ' What your Excellency says are the words of truth and wisdom. The frontier is at peace ; the Tekkes no longer trouble us ; and Russia is our very good friend and neighbour.' He paused for a moment, then he continued : ' But tell me, your Excellency, if you had to choose between having in your Divan a very bad-tempered cat or a very good-tempered tiger, which would your Excellency prefer ? ' "

" And the moral of this ingenious parable applied to the present situation——? "

" Is this," said M. Lessar : " England is our bad-tempered cat, Germany is our good-tempered tiger. You may scratch and swear as you please, you can never be anything but a nuisance to Russia. With Germany it is different. Germany's conduct to Russia in all matters is perfect. She will at any time go out of her way to oblige us. She will not abandon her own interests to serve us, but those of her friends and allies she will sacrifice with enthusiasm to avoid crossing us. In all our enterprises, Near East and Far East, or anywhere else, we can count upon German support as confidently as we can count upon English opposition. But Germany, if she should ever quarrel with Russia, can strike at our heart. Therefore——"

" Therefore ? " I repeated.

" Therefore, as nations have to adjust their cal-

culations according to their vital needs, not according to the sentimental moods of their peoples, Russia, while rejoicing in all the good turns Germany does her, and resenting all the bad turns England tries to do to her, can never forget that she is never in real danger from England, while Germany always can strike at the heart. Hence we ask ourselves not whether the annihilation of England would gratify our resentment at her meddlesome insolence, but whether, if England disappeared, Germany would not be even more formidable than she is to-day. England counts for nothing as a military power. You will send one hundred thousand men to South Africa. What of that ? One hundred thousand men are neither here nor there in the real war which we have always to think about. Your importance as an international counterweight to Germany lies in your navy. You may not use it for our benefit ; but the mere fact of its existence as a force not thrown into either scale makes for peace and tends to moderate German ambitions. If your fleet went to the bottom, there would disappear one of the few restraints on war, and Russia cannot see with indifference such a disaster."

As the war went on, M. Lessar often discussed with me, and always with increasing wonder, what price the Kaiser was to receive for his support of England during the war. I suggested Samoa and a few other trifles. "Pshaw," he said, "these are nothing ! No nation has ever rendered another greater service than did the Kaiser when he stood between you and European intervention on behalf of the Boers. I do not say that any Power would have proposed to go to war ; but diplomatic action of a very awkward kind has more than once been mooted, and always

it was quashed by the absolute refusal of the Kaiser to listen to any such policies. And this was all the more wonderful when you consider how unpopular the war was in Germany."

I often recalled that remark in later years when the *Spectator* and the *National Review* were blazing away in hot fury against the "shameless subserviency" to Germany shown by our Government in Venezuela and the Bagdad railway concession. The Kaiser, like the Devil who buys a sinner's soul, got cheated out of his bargain at the last moment; but it always seemed to me rather hard on the Devil.

When Mr. Gladstone made his defiant speech on the Penjdeh question, Madame Novikoff's patience gave way. She wrote me, May 1, 1885 :—

"Is Gladstone mad? Why does he use such very rude language if he does not want war?

"How little you know the Afghans if you trust the present Ameer! Dufferin seems to be much less intelligent than he was supposed to be! What a pity! Let me tell you a little fact I learned yesterday evening. General Krijanovsky had a long chat with Abdur Rahman *some years* ago. The latter assured the General that Russia could do whatever she liked with India. *Send one Russian soldier* to the Himalaya, and all India will rise like one man. 'The moment you really threaten England, you will have all the Afghans and all the Indians on your side.' These words are absolutely true. I can guarantee the truthfulness of my informer."

Abdur Rahman no doubt talked like that when he was a Russian pensioner in Turkestan. That Madame Novikoff should have blazed out in this

fashion shows how keenly she felt that Mr. Gladstone —her great and glorious Mr. Gladstone—should have menaced Russia with a war in a dispute in which, as the facts afterwards showed, all the fault lay on the English side.

But Mr. Gladstone never quite forgave the Russians for what he considered their unfriendly action toward his Government in that crisis.

This note of pained regret appears in more than one of his letters. After he had left office he wrote to Madame Novikoff, August 21, 1885 :—

"I hope some rational method will be found of disposing of the small question which now alone remains unsettled, I apprehend, on the Afghan frontier, and an end thus put to a long business. Both you and we have too much of serious work to do, and ought not to make work.

"The new Government have, I think, to their own prejudice, made a declaration at once of their Irish intentions, while the measures to give effect to them are to be postponed apparently for some nine months. I do not think this will do.

"Mr. Stead keeps his *P.M.G.* steady to you—to us, while in Government, he did a deal of mischief, apparently believing all the time that he was our champion."

As Mr. Stead had to maintain almost single-handed the cause of peace in that prolonged crisis, it was natural that a Prime Minister who was threatening war should regard him as a mischievous person —especially as he always tried to make out that Mr. Gladstone really wished for peace all the time.

Eight years later, when Mr. Gladstone was on the point of leaving office, he sounded the same note :—

"10 Downing Street,
Whitehall, *April* 15, 1893.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—On your homeward journey be assured that you carry with you all our best wishes.

"I hope you will work for the concord of the countries and their mutual esteem. I hope also, in that interest of such objects, that the privileges of Finland have not been abridged.

"Accept my thanks for the evidently interesting work you have sent me; and accept also a little book of essays by me on the Irish question.

"Finally, I hope that, if not I, yet other Ministers may succeed better in winning friendly action from the Government of your great country than I did in 1885.—I am yours sincerely,

"W. E. Gladstone."

In justice to the Russian Government, it must be repeated that it was largely due to their friendly regard for Mr. Gladstone they did not take the prompt and decided action which the circumstances demanded when British agents incited the Afghans to occupy a position of vantage in the debatable land which the Joint Commission had been appointed to survey and adjudicate upon. If any other than Mr. Gladstone had been at the head of the British Government, a vigorous denunciation of this act of bad faith would have brought our Cabinet to its senses, and the crisis would never have arisen.

It was the very fact of their entire confidence in Mr. Gladstone that led the Russians to avoid any action that they thought might have embarrassed him. Hence the delay and misunderstanding and alternately the risk of war.

It is easy to see how indignant the Russians must have felt when, after what they held to be their extreme forbearance in the presence of an act of British bad faith, the Prime Minister in whom they trusted should have threatened them with war.

CHAPTER X.

Alexander III.

IT is difficult to separate the reminiscences of Madame Novikoff from my own memories of the years when we were working together for the removal of the misunderstandings which stood in the way of an entente cordiale between our two countries. This is specially true of the year 1888, when, at Madame Novikoff's invitation, I paid my first visit to Russia and made the personal acquaintance of the Sovereign and the statesmen of whose policy I had been for years the unauthorised apologist in the British Press.

The possibility of a visit to Russia had been discussed between us ever since the signature of the Berlin Treaty. When I became Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*,—in fact although not in title,—and especially after the trying crisis of 1885, the need for first-hand personal acquaintance with the directors of Russian policy was obvious. Without any authorisation or official recognition I had come to be regarded as the unofficial mouthpiece of a Government from whom—till I met M. Lessar—I never received a hint and whose ideas and intentions I had to pick up as best I could from the newspapers and the letters of Madame Novikoff.

It was in 1885 that the Imperial Family first became subscribers and readers of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, but

ALEXANDER III.
Emperor of Russia, 1881–1894.

it was not till 1888 that I had the privilege of a face-to-face conversation with my Imperial subscriber. I owed both the subscription and the interview to Madame Novikoff. She told me that on her recommendation the Empress ordered the *Pall Mall Gazette* to be sent daily to the Palace. Imagine Madame Novikoff's dismay when, on arriving at Berlin, she found that I had begun on July 6 the publication of the series of articles entitled "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon," which, under the name "Les Scandales de Londres," created a profound sensation throughout the Old World and the New. She had known nothing of my intentions with regard to that campaign, and she was aghast at the thought of the impression the first numbers of the *Pall Mall Gazette* would make on the subscribers at Tsarskoe Selo. Fortunately, the Russian Imperial Family agreed with Queen Victoria in recognising the necessity for the exposure, and, instead of impairing my influence, the "Maiden Tribute," there as in many other places, stood me in good stead.[1]

I came out of prison in January 1886, but it was not until 1887 that the Russian visit was seriously discussed. At that time the Terrorists were very busy, and it was impossible to say definitely when or

[1] Madame Novikoff not unnaturally felt much embarrassed by the sudden new development, of which she had received no preliminary warning. I hardly saw her during the year 1885. Here is an extract from one of M. de Laveleye's letters, written when the agitation was at its height, in reply to a note of hers speaking sympathetically of my action in the matter :—

"Yes, Stead is admirable, but so are the English people. The movement which is extending everywhere just now is a great proof of moral vigour.

"The meetings are very numerous and energetic. Nothing like that is possible in France or with us. The energy for moral warfare is lacking with us. We are only moved by material interests."

where the Tsar could be seen. There was also a very general scepticism as to the possibility of the Tsar consenting to receive a journalist. Alexander III. was reserved and taciturn. Madame Novikoff met with little encouragement.

In 1888, however, the European situation became more threatening. General Boulanger had suddenly risen into notoriety, and there was a widespread expectation that the year would not pass without a general war. The indeterminate factor was the personality of the Russian Emperor. It is almost incredible to us to-day, but it is perfectly true, that the almost universal belief among our leading soldiers and statesmen in 1888 was that Alexander III. was the great danger to the peace of Europe. Our Press teemed with libels. The Tsar was calumniated as a man who entertained ambitious designs which would plunge the world into war!

I wrote to Madame Novikoff saying that the time had come when I must see the Tsar and ascertain at first hand what manner of man he was and what was the policy he intended to pursue.

It was, however, no easy matter to arrange. The Tsar had never received a journalist, and the situation in Russia was very troubled. Besides, as Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, I had taken a strong lead in the somewhat turbulent controversy that raged round Trafalgar Square, and, what was more serious, I had frankly paid homage to the self-sacrificing devotion of the Nihilists. Madame Novikoff wrote me on June 10, 1887, the following very characteristic letter:—

"How desperately difficult it is just now to arrange any kind of interview with the Emperor. It is

almost incredible! Imperial plans form a state secret since all those diabolical attempts which disgraced Russia. There are several projected trips just now, but whenever you ask Giers to tell you when and where they are going to take place he looks like a poor chicken when its head is taken off. Quite absurd! Besides, though people avoid mentioning that *point to me*—who am your friend—I think they remember the enthusiastic tribute of admiration you bestowed upon our Nihilists, treating them like regular saints, who devote their souls 'to God alone.' When I mention you, I refer to the help you showed to the Russian cause in the Afghan business and on many other occasions, and then I get, 'Ah oui, c'est très vrai. Il a été très courageux et très impartial.'"

However, Madame Novikoff set herself to achieve the almost impossible, and, by the aid of her brother, General Kiréeff, aide-de-camp to the Grand Duke Constantine, M. Pobédonostzeff, and General Richter, she succeeded in securing Alexander III.'s consent. I was making arrangements to leave London when I received a telegram from her saying that Sir Robert Morier, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, had interfered to spoil the interview, and suggesting that Lord Salisbury might be appealed to with advantage to remove what might otherwise be an insuperable obstacle.

I went at once to see Mr. Balfour. "I wish you would speak to your uncle to keep his Ambassador in order. Why should he interfere? I did not ask his help. Why should he not let Madame Novikoff fix it up for me if she can?"

Mr. Balfour, as always, was sympathetic and

helpful. What passed between the Foreign Office and the St. Petersburg Embassy I do not know, but in a day or two I received the welcome news that the difficulty had been removed. I interviewed Mr. Gladstone and most of our leading statesmen in London before I started. I saw General Boulanger, M. Clemenceau, M. Floquet, M. Goblet, and other leading Frenchmen in Paris. At Liège I spent a day with M. de Laveleye. At Berlin, Prince Bismarck refused to see me, excusing himself to the friend who gave me a letter of introduction on the ground that I was "a very dangerous man." I saw Sir Morell Mackenzie in the antechamber of the room in which Emperor Frederick lay dying, and I interviewed at the Russian Embassy at Berlin M. Mouravieff, whom I was to meet ten years later as Russian Foreign Minister. I arrived at St. Petersburg on the eve of the Russian Easter, in time to attend the midnight service at St. Isaac's.

On my arrival at the Hôtel de l'Europe I heard the story of the Ambassadorial interference. Sir Robert Morier I had never met. But he knew the *P.M.G.* He wrote to Madame Novikoff in 1886:—

"Many thanks for the *Pall Mall*, but I myself keep that paper as an indispensable daily record of temperature in the lunatic asylum to which my country is reduced."

Sir Robert Morier was a man of vehement stormy passions. He had no likes or dislikes, only loves and hatreds. He hated Home Rule with his whole soul, with even more vehement passion than he hated Bismarck; and he was firmly persuaded in his own mind that it was the *Pall Mall Gazette* that was

responsible for what he regarded as Mr. Gladstone's apostasy from the cause of the Union.[1]

To Sir Robert Morier the news that the Editor of the Home Rule organ was to be received by the Tsar was startling indeed. He would not present me—could not, indeed, in accordance with the etiquette by which no Ambassador can present anybody to a foreign monarch who has not already been presented to his own Sovereign. I have never been presented at Court, and I had no intention of invoking the good offices of Sir Robert Morier. But he objected to the presentation taking place. He so scared M. Pobédonostzeff by drawing a frightful picture of me as Home Ruler and ex-gaol-bird, revolutionist, and Heaven knows what, that the Procurator of the Holy Synod thought that he had better have nothing to do with such a customer. Hence the hitch. But after Mr. Balfour's benevolent intervention Sir Robert Morier withdrew his opposition. Feeling that Sir Robert Morier had gone out of his way to spoil an interview to which I attached the utmost importance, I did not call upon him, but contented myself with sending him a small pamphlet which M. de Laveleye had asked me to

[1] Sir Robert Morier and I afterwards became great friends, and I often dined with him at the Embassy. After he had dined and wined he would sometimes explode like a veritable volcano. For instance, I well remember one occasion on which he stood up and apostrophised poor me, cowering before the irate son of Anak. "You are all one gang, I tell you, the whole —— lot of you. One is as bad as the other. Look!" he exclaimed, pointing to an imaginary row of malefactors, "I see Joe Brady and the other murderers who stabbed poor Freddy Cavendish to death in Phœnix Park. Arm in arm with them is the 'brave little woman' who carried the parcel of surgical knives for the assassins. And arm in arm with her is Mr. Parnell, and"—his voice now rising to a pitch of fury—"arm in arm with Mr. Parnell is Mr. Gladstone, and arm in arm with Mr. Gladstone I see you, and," he roared, raising his right hand, "I would to —— I had a bomb of dynamite to blow the whole —— lot of you to ——!"

deliver. To my great surprise, Sir Robert Morier at once asked me to dine with him at the Embassy; and from that day till his death I enjoyed the privilege of the friendship of one of the ablest, if not one of the greatest, men in the Diplomatic Service of Great Britain.

General Kiréeff, Madame Novikoff's brother, introduced me to M. de Giers, then Foreign Minister of Russia. Madame Novikoff introduced me to M. Pobédonostzeff, General Ignatieff, and many others. It was understood that I was to be presented to the Emperor, but of the times and seasons no one could speak positively. From being actively hostile to my presentation Sir Robert Morier became almost feverishly impatient for the interview to come off. The question whether the Tsar would receive me or would not was as eagerly debated as if it had a diplomatic significance. "There is not a Foreign Minister in St. Petersburg," said Sir Robert Morier, "who has not written home this week discussing the chances for or against." M. Millevoye was in St. Petersburg on the same errand. He was championed by Miss Maud Gonne, and was believed to be an emissary from General Boulanger.

The general opinion was that I had come to Russia on a fool's errand. "Poor Stead," said the wife of one distinguished Ambassador, "he imagines he is going to be received by the Emperor. Now the Emperor never receives journalists, and, what is still more absurd, Stead imagines the Emperor will talk to him about politics. Now the Emperor never talks about politics to any one. About the weather he may say a few words, but that is the limit."

I suppose I would not have been human if I had not felt a little *schadenfreude* when these remarks were

repeated to me as having been uttered on the very day on which I was received by the Emperor and on which he discussed with me the whole Foreign Policy of Russia from Japan to Berlin. Nor was I less gratified when I heard the exclamation of envious admiration :—

"Well, was there ever such a thing? It is all Madame Novikoff's doing. Ah, these ladies, these ladies; what is it they cannot do!"

The interview took place in the Palace at Gatschina.

General Richter left the room as soon as he had presented me, and I found myself face to face with the Emperor. I had been told that he would see me for a few minutes immediately before lunch, and I was afterwards informed that the Tsar had said he would merely make a few conventional remarks and then dismiss me in order to join his family at lunch. It turned out otherwise.

I began the conversation by saying in all sincerity that instead of being seated in his presence it was more fitting that I should kneel at his feet to express with all humble penitence my sorrow and shame for the misfortunes which my country, under Lord Beaconsfield, had inflicted upon the Russians.[1] I

[1] To those who did not live through the crisis of 1876–78 this remark may seem to need explanation. I quote therefore a passage written in 1888 descriptive of the misfortunes brought upon Russia by the refusal of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, in 1877, to enforce the recommendations of the Constantinople Conference to which Lord Salisbury had given his entire assent :—

"The crowning moment came, and the Turks waited to know whether England meant what she said. Then, to our everlasting shame and dishonour, Lord Salisbury's master, whom we had placed in possession of the right to speak in the name and with the authority of England, thrust his tongue in his cheek, laid his finger on one side of his nose, and winked significantly at the Grand Turk. Instantly all that the Powers had done was undone. Sir Henry Elliott and Lord Beaconsfield neutralised the effect of Lord Salisbury's diplomacy,

suppose it was the earnest simplicity with which I said this that touched Alexander the Third. He began to talk, slowly at first, but so as to give me an opening of which I was quick to avail myself. He spoke of Madame Novikoff, praised the admirable articles which she had contributed to the *Northern Echo*, and more recently to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and expressed himself very kindly concerning the share I had had in her work in England. I replied that it had given me great pleasure to make such amends as one English-

and instead of taking a great onward stride in the direction of peace, and the federation of Europe, the Continent was plunged into a long and horrible war. For all the blood shed in torrents at Plevna and the Balkans England was responsible. A single resolute movement of our fleet upon Constantinople, and Turkish resistance would instantly have collapsed. But that movement was not made. When the Turks were told by half our newspapers that if they stood firm England would hasten to their assistance, the die was cast. There is hardly a Russian village from the Oural to the Vistula, from Archangel to the Crimea, but mourns to-day some son or brother who went but who returned not in the last great war. A hundred and twenty thousand Russians — brave, simple, kindly-hearted — died horrible deaths on the battlefield and in the hospital because Russia was left alone to do the work which Europe might have done without strain or danger if England had but been true. And this vast, frugal, industrious peasantry, whose only ambition is to be allowed to toil in peace from sunrise to sunset for 10d. a day, has been saddled with a war debt of a hundred millions sterling for the liberation of Bulgaria, not one penny of which would have needed to be spent but for England's crime. For it so happens that if we had been indifferent enough to considerations of humanity and of liberty boldly to have ranged ourselves on the side of the Turks, and energetically organised for their defence, the peace might also have been preserved, although Bulgaria would not have been freed. We could have kept the peace, with or without liberty for Bulgaria, whichever side we took, if we had only stuck to it. What we did was to stick to one side just long enough to make it impossible for Russia to draw back, and then to desert it just at the moment when our desertion made it impossible for Turkey to submit. If we had deliberately played our cards in order to expose Turkey to invasion, and to force the Russians to face the sacrifices of war, we could not, by the most malevolent ingenuity, have adopted a policy better adapted to secure that end."—*Truth about Russia*, pp. 61-62.

man could for the injuries which Lord Beaconsfield had inflicted upon Russia by refusing to unite in the joint coercion of the Sultan. But, I added, I regretted to have to admit that the course which I had taken had exposed Russia to a danger which might prove serious. In answer to his somewhat incredulous question as to how that could be, I explained that owing to my ardent defence of the Russian cause I had come to be regarded as a Russian semi-official mouthpiece. I was nothing of the kind, but the popular belief might be very mischievous at some future crisis. "How?" said the Tsar. "This way," I replied. "Suppose that some dispute crops up threatening the good relations of the two Empires. I think that England ought to make certain concessions, with which if made, I think, Russia would be content. I advocate this course strongly, make strong agitation in favour of it, and at last, maybe, succeed in inducing the Government to make the concessions. But if it were then to be discovered that you attached no value to these concessions, and insisted upon other demands, the situation would become almost fatal. For the British public, which had firmly believed that I was your organ, whereas in reality you had never given me any lead or guidance at all, would say, 'Confound these Russians! it is no use trying to satisfy them. No sooner do we, by a great sacrifice, make the concessions which they have been putting forward than they spring upon us a new set of demands. It's quite clear we can do nothing with them, we had better fight and be done with it.'"

The Emperor reflected a little, and then said, "I see. What do you want?"

"What I want," I replied, "and why I am here, is to ask whether, since I have acquired the reputation of

being your organ, you will at least have the goodness to keep me informed as to what your policy actually is ? "

The Emperor lit a cigarette, and his great hound got up and walked slowly to and fro as if he thought it was time for me to go.

" My position," I went on, " is like that of a Russian outpost holding a position in the midst of a hostile country. Do not leave me without cartridges ! "

The Emperor smiled, and said, " What do you want to know ? "

" I want to know," I replied, " if you will be so good as to tell me, what policy you intend to follow upon all the questions on which there is any danger of Russia and England coming into collision ? "

The Emperor, without a moment's hesitation, said, " Yes ! Ask me any questions you like and I will tell you what you want to know."

I began at once with the Far East. I asked about Russia's relations with Japan and with China. The Emperor answered me simply, categorically, without phrases, saying what his policy was in each case. Travelling westward, I came in order upon Central Asia and Afghanistan, Persia, and then to the near Eastern question in all its phases. I asked him particularly concerning the future of Constantinople, and the political prospects of Bulgaria. To all my questions he replied clearly, without demur. He rather boggled at my question as to whether, in case of certain contingencies arising, Russia would assent to a British occupation of Gallipoli. " Why discuss so remote a contingency ? " he asked.

" Because," I replied, " the contingency may arrive when I am not in a position to ask you what you want or what you do not want. Whereas now you could let

me know, at least, what is in your opinion possible, and what is manifestly impossible."

The Tsar answered this question, and we went on to discuss "the Coburger," Prince Ferdinand, and the position in the Balkans.

When I had got through my *questionnaire* my conscience smote me as I remembered the Imperial lunch. I looked at my watch. We had been talking between half an hour and three-quarters. I jumped up, thanked the Emperor warmly for his great kindness, and said that I could not think of taking up any more of his time. An amused smile, not unmixed with surprise, on the Emperor's face, as he slowly rose to his feet, made me feel what an ass I had been. If I had only gone on talking I might have had another half-hour! Now it was too late. The Emperor came forward, took my hand, and told me to ask M. de Giers to arrange to supply me with information in the future. As I looked up into the strong, kindly features of Alexander III. I felt impelled to say—

"When I think of all the calumnies and insults heaped upon you in our Press, I cannot but feel that it would be only natural if you were to lose your temper. And if you did lose your temper, half a million men would find a bloody grave before you regained it."

"You need not be afraid," said he gravely, "I shall not lose my temper. There will be no war. I will answer for peace." And then he added, "If England, Russia, and Germany stand together the peace of the world is secured."

I never saw Alexander III. again. But every word that he spoke to me on that memorable occasion was made good in deeds, as long as his reign lasted.

After a solitary lunch at the palace, General Richter brought me back to St. Petersburg. He was

a most kindly and courteous companion, who was much impressed by the unexpected length of the interview. But when I accidentally mentioned that I had discussed the future of Constantinople and the Straits with the Emperor, I was amused to find him almost speechless with amazement.

On reaching St. Petersburg I at once saw Madame Novikoff, who was naturally pleased at such an unprecedented triumph. I then hastened to the British Embassy, where I found Sir Robert Morier impatient to hear from me the last detail of my conversation. How hungrily he chafed at any delay, how eagerly he anticipated my questions, and how he devoured my report,—alas! how his keen intelligence and intense interest contrasted with the nonchalant apathy and blasé indifference with which other Ambassadors in after years received similar reports of other interviews. But Sir Robert Morier was a statesman, and not a mere Foreign Office clerk.

When I had finished my recital, Sir Robert Morier said—

"You have covered the whole ground with one exception—Egypt."

"I would not treat that question as open," I replied. "Our position in Egypt I thought ought to be taken for granted."

All the same, though the excuse was good, it would have given a more complete finish to the survey if I had extended it to the banks of the Nile.

A few days later Sir Robert Morier sent for me. He said he had already sent the Foreign Office a full report of my interview, but he wished to read me the private letter which he was sending to Queen Victoria, as was his wont when he had matters of importance to deal with. Sir Robert then read me a

brilliant description of the interview, and a precise and detailed summary of what the Emperor had said. He prefaced his letter by saying that never since the memorable interview between Nicholas I. and Sir Hamilton Seymour had any Russian emperor ever spoken with such frankness and fulness to any Englishman. Not only so, but the circumstances under which the interview had taken place, and the characters of the interlocutors, rendered it certain that the *verité vraie* had been spoken. The result was most reassuring, and justified and confirmed the reports he had previously sent as to the essentially pacific policy of Alexander III.

When I returned to London I wrote a book entitled *Truth about Russia*, which had the misfortune to excite the liveliest displeasure on the part of Madame Novikoff, but oddly enough had the good fortune to please Mr. Froude. After reading it he wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

"*March* 11, 1889.

"I have been reading Stead's book with real pleasure. He is a far abler man than I supposed him to be, and with his political judgment generally I entirely agree. He is well informed, has a straight eye, and except on certain questions, which need not be alluded to further, very right-minded. Why is he not more beautiful to look at ?"

Woe is me ! But I was born so, and the Ethiopian cannot change his skin nor the leopard his spots.

Three-fourths of my book pleased Madame Novikoff well enough, but the section which I devoted to setting forth the case against M. Pobédonostzeff's policy of religious persecution, brought down a storm upon my head. The following letter, written by her brother

General Alexander Kiréeff, will illustrate as well as anything the impossibility of harmonising the views of an English Nonconformist and a Russian Orthodox. General Kiréeff wrote to his sister :—

"Do tell Stead that in simple fairness he must say that though he may anathematise Russia for her partiality and her want of tolerance, I insist upon his saying at the same time, either in a footnote, or no matter in what form, that we are guided by two considerations : 1. Our country being organically united with her Church—hence the name of 'Holy Russia'—everything attacking the Church attacks the very essence of the country. And that, 2. Being absolutely convinced of possessing absolute truth, all that attacks that Truth is an aggression we can never tolerate."

Madame Novikoff added :—

"Only indifference could allow propaganda under such conditions. If the Twelve Apostles came we would receive them with open arms, because they would only strengthen us in our faith, and not shake it."

This, of course, assumes as a self-evident proposition that the Twelve Apostles would find themselves in absolute accord with Greek Orthodoxy. It may be so, but it is not quite obvious to those outside the pale of the Eastern Church. Madame Novikoff was very angry. She wrote :—

"For ten years you tried to remove the hostility between Russia and England. Now it looks as if your only desire was to commit every Russian who

felt some sympathy either with yourself or your work. When you calumniate us, it is fairer to show some hesitation, some doubts, and assume if only a little desire to learn the truth. . . . In the preface also, it is your duty—not as a 'saint,' but as a simple, honest shopkeeper—to say that Madame Novikoff begged me to take out three-fourths of this work, as she is absolutely certain that they are mere calumnies."

Three-fourths was, I hope, an exaggeration. M. Lessar, who went through the book, said he thought that there were about eighty pages, those relating to religious persecution in Russia, which could never be allowed to pass the censorship.

As a matter of fact the censor interdicted the whole book. Then a strange thing happened. The Emperor, Alexander III., I was told, had intervened, the prohibition was taken off, and *Truth about Russia* was freely circulated throughout the Russian Empire. I well remember M. Lessar's blank amazement when I told him that the censor's interdict had been raised. "It is impossible!" he said. But it was true for all that.

Madame Novikoff's wrath soon passed. I had mentioned in the *Pall Mall Gazette* the day when she received her friends. She wrote :—

"One can never be angry with you, and really, honestly, I did my best to be savage. But you will make me burst of laughing on my death-bed! Why did you—naughtiest of men—announce my receptions? I shall have to ask my men 'to sit on the floor,' ladies are sure to rush anywhere that horrid 'stronger' sex is sure to be seen! But now you must come yourself whether you like it or not.—Your savage O. K."

I did not go to Madame Novikoff's receptions, for the same reason Mr. Gladstone hinted at in one of his letters when he wrote to her :—

"I have some hope of calling, with or without my wife, to-morrow at six, or soon after; but must I not expect to find you in the midst of a gay and brilliant circle, and to come away no wiser than I went?"

It was often so. She wrote to me about one of her receptions :—

"I had about twenty-eight people—if not more. Gladstone came early, at three—then Froude, then Lecky and his wife, the Prince and Princess Ghika (the Roumanian Minister and his wife), then the Brazilian Minister's wife, then the Portuguese, Miss Maud Gonne and her uncle, and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman and his wife."

Mr. Gladstone was sometimes more fortunate than to be one of a crowd. Madame Novikoff reported one of his visits as follows :—

"Mr. Gladstone came, and was most interesting. He again said you have been very useful during the Eastern crisis, and a true friend to me; to which I said that I never forget the obligations I am under.

"Gladstone is soon going to Naples. He looks remarkably well, and how admirably kind! He wrote to Giers to congratulate him on his Jubilee, and naturally had a very grateful reply."

Here are two characteristic extracts from her notes of those days :—

" Can anybody be more pleasant than Mr. George Lewis ? "

As this was Sir George Lewis, the famous lawyer, all who know him will be able to answer Madame Novikoff's question in the negative—if ladies are regarded as hors concours.

Sometimes, not often, Madame Novikoff's sarcasm was a little bitter, as, for instance, when she wrote :—

" Foreigners are greatly amused with the splendid diamond bracelet that English ladies—with Lady Salisbury at the head of the enterprise—offer to the wife of the American Minister. This is, no doubt, a wonderful demonstration of humility !

" Will they not present a whip, with a diamond top, to Herbert Bismarck for the lesson he gave to England ? "

Madame Novikoff seldom described social functions in her letters. One of the rare exceptions was the following note on an exhibition of tableaux vivants at the Michel Palace. In earlier days Madame Novikoff had herself taken part in such tableaux, posing one day as St. John the Evangelist, and the next as a Dutch woman in a tableau with the Heir Apparent. Now she was content to be a spectator. She wrote me (April 5, 1888) :—

" The seven tableaux were given at the room where the theatricals of the Palais Michel are generally performed. The Grand Duchess Elizabeth was most beautiful as *Péri* in the first tableau. The Princess Helen—Grand Duchess Cathérine's daughter—performed the first part in the seventh—' The Glory of

Russia.' She was most successful, and was the very picture of Imperial dignity and splendour. . . . The Princess Helen is a very remarkable singer—as good as any modern artiste. She conducted the female choruses, and sang the first mezzo-soprano part during the tableaux, in which she had no part as one of the tableau artistes. The last picture, 'Parnassus,' was most effectively and cleverly arranged on one of the galleries over the staircase, facing the entrance. During this latter piece a part of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven was executed. The musical part was so well performed that Rubinstein did not hesitate in expressing his most cordial approval, though as a rule he is seldom pleased as far as musical performances go.

"Our dear Emperor and the Empress looked pleased, and were charmingly gracious and kind to everybody. Really they deserve—those two—to be loved as they are by their country."

The relations between Russia and England, after 1888, being normal for several years, Madame Novikoff found no particular call for any activity on the old lines. I will therefore pass rapidly over 1889, 1890, and 1891, merely quoting a few extracts from her own letters and from those of her friends.

Here is a Grand Ducal item of gossip:—

"*March* 16/4, 1889.

"To-morrow they are going to give a splendid performance at the Marble Palace of Mozart's *Requiem*. The young Grand Duke Constantine is an excellent poet and musician. In all the pieces which are going to be executed, the piano part is held by him, and he plays all by heart."

Here is a characteristic protest from Mr. Kinglake :—

"*January* 13, 1889.

"Is your friend Mr. Llewellyn Davies the man that opposes the grotesque 'Salvation Army'? I would let those ragamuffins call themselves 'saints,' 'angels,' 'prophets,' 'cherubim,' 'seraphim,' or even Olympian 'Gods' and 'Goddesses,' but the pretension of taking the rank of officers in the Army is to me, as you know, beyond measure repulsive."

King Milan of Servia abdicated in March 1889. He had in the previous October divorced his wife Queen Natalie, having found a more obliging Metropolitan in Theodosius than in his predecessor Michael, who resigned rather than consent to be made the instrument of such an illegality. Madame Novikoff, who had written in support of the Archbishop Michael in the English Press, subsequently met him in St. Petersburg. Writing on May 3, 1889, she said :—

"The Metropolitan Michael—who came here for a couple of days—called on me this morning, and surprised me. I expected a tall, a strong, a soldier-like giant; in reality he is a small, a thin, a very quiet and a very taking old man. His look is full of life and intelligence, but his smile is kindness itself. We talked of Nicholas, of the flowers I sent for the volunteers' monument, and it was, I confess, a very impressive conversation. The Queen Natalie is sure to join her boy, but the delay is dictated by pure prudence; only you will see that if Milan came back, followed by an Austrian occupation, it would greatly compromise European peace. I asked the Metropolitan whether he did not think Miss Irby's work

at Serajevo very noble and useful? He said: 'Oh yes, indeed—God bless her for her self-devotion.' The Austrian propaganda is very energetic in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and I am assured, thanks to the Austrian influence, that all the new generation has given up already the use of the Cyrillian alphabet. You understand what *that* means."

In 1890 M. de Giers sent Madame Novikoff the following little note in recognition of her vindication of Russian policy in the English Press :—

"*Avril* 9/21, 1890.

"Je vous suis bien reconnaissant pour l'envoi de votre intéressant article servant de réponse à la presse anglaise qui délecte tant de calomnies sur notre compte. Il faut espérer qu'il produira l'effet désiré en Angleterre."

A brief letter, but to the point. It is the only formal acknowledgment from a Russian Foreign Minister I have found in the correspondence of the unwearied services rendered to Russia as a labour of love by Madame Novikoff.

SIR ROBERT MORIER.
British Ambassador in Russia, 1884–1893.

CHAPTER XI.

Sir Robert Morier and Captain Wiggins.

SIR ROBERT MORIER, like many other notable personages of whom I have had occasion to speak in this narrative, entertained at first a curious prejudice against Madame Novikoff. She told me once—

"When Kinglake urged him to make my acquaintance—Morier impatiently exclaimed, 'I shall not, I will not! What is the meaning of this general "Oh, but you must go to Madame Novikoff. She is the very person to help you. Nobody like her"? It sounds quite absurd, incomprehensible!' Kinglake said: 'I smiled, and observed, "My dear friend, you are losing your time, you will have to go to her!" And so he did,' said dear old Kinglake, as he repeated the conversation to Mr. Froude and Count Beust."

Despite the emphatic assurances of his old friend Kinglake, Sir Robert Morier decided, on taking up his residence at St. Petersburg, to give Madame Novikoff a wide berth. It was a foolish resolve, the folly of which the Ambassador was not long in discovering. Sir Robert was a practical man of business, who wanted to get things done, and who was in a chronic state of blazing impatience against the sluggish and apathetic Tchinovniks of the Government departments. He very soon discovered that in overcoming this *vis inertiæ* he needed all the allies

he could enlist, and long before his death he had made the most practical of all tributes to the influence, the energy, and the good sense of Madame Novikoff, by constantly appealing to her to help him out whenever the pet enterprise of his old age, the opening up of the sea-way to Siberia, was in danger.

Some years later, in 1888, Mr. Kinglake wrote to Madame Novikoff, August 16, from Richmond :—

" Yesterday Morier came down here, very kindly, to see me, and remained with me some hours ; his conversation, as you may suppose, was very interesting to me. He was the first to speak of you ; and I cannot tell you, my dear friend, how pleasant it was to me to see the really cordial feeling with which he regards you, and the appreciation he has of you. He was so abounding in energy that I did not find myself called upon to say much."

Upon the subject of Siberia and its sea-gate Madame Novikoff was almost as enthusiastic as Sir Robert Morier, and both kindled their enthusiasm at the altar of Captain Wiggins of Sunderland, one of the Elizabethan worthies born in the reign of Victoria, whose character Spenser might have taken as a model for the simplest hearted and most intrepid of the knights with which he peopled the Court of the " Faerie Queen."

Captain Wiggins was a North Countryman, worthy to be named beside Hawkins or Frobisher, or any sturdy mariner among those who three hundred years ago sailed the Spanish Main, and built up by seamanship and English valour the maritime supremacy of England. Captain Wiggins was the man who found the lost key of the water-gate which leads to Russia's Land of Gold in Siberia, and the story

of his difficulties in endeavouring to force his way to the door reminds one of the magic spells by which in the romances of chivalry heroes were warded off from hidden treasures.

Within the heart of the immense domain which Russia possesses in Northern Asia, there are practically inexhaustible resources from which the world can draw supplies of the two things it most desires—wheat and gold. But at present the wheat-land is left untilled because its crops cannot be brought to market, and the gold remains imprisoned in its native quartz because it is impossible to carry to the heart of Siberia the heavy machinery necessary for its extraction. To liberate these two vast stores of food and of wealth it is absolutely necessary that there should be a water-way between them and the outer world. There is such a water-way, although it is locked by ice for nine months out of every twelve, and it is of simply incalculable importance to the future of Siberia that during the only three months that the water-gate is open, no artificial impediment in the shape of red-tape barriers, official circumlocution, etc., should be allowed to close it.

Siberia is an Australia lying in the latitude of Canada. As it was with Russia when Peter the Great came to the throne, the first necessity for its growth is access to the sea. Captain Wiggins unlocked the gate which is to Siberia what the Neva was to Russia of the eighteenth century. There are two great rivers, the Ob and the Yenissei, by which the trade of the world can penetrate three thousand miles into the heart of Asia, piercing the richest undeveloped country in the world, and tapping the immense market of Northern China. But until the seventies it was believed that all access to these rivers was impenetrably barred by

the ice-pack which was believed to stretch from the Iron Gates to the North Pole.

Captain Wiggins discovered the way in almost by accident in 1874, when he was cruising in Arctic regions in the steam yacht *Diana*. In 1875 Professor Nordenskjold succeeded in making his way into the Yenissei by the Wiggins route. In 1876 he sailed up the Yenessei 1000 miles in a 150-ton steam yacht, and in 1878 Captain Wiggins made the journey from England to the mouth of the Ob and back in exactly two months. In 1879 an attempt was made by some speculators to open up a trade route by sea to the heart of Siberia, but the enterprise, conceived and carried out in entire disregard of Captain Wiggins' warnings, resulted in disastrous failure. It was not till 1887 that Captain Wiggins took the steamer *Phœnix* up the Yenissei, steaming up the river to Yenisseisk, where he anchored for the winter. In 1888 Captain Wiggins went out in the *Labrador* to bring the *Phœnix* home. It was this year that Sir Robert found it necessary to appeal to Madame Novikoff for help in overcoming the obstacles in the way of opening up the sea route to Siberia.[1]

The Russian Government was favourably disposed. I was privileged to be the messenger who brought to Sir Robert Morier M. Wischnegradski's favourable reply to his application that British ships might be allowed to ply on the Yenessei for one year, after which it was hoped the Russians would be prepared to buy and to take deliveries of cargoes at the mouths of these rivers. Five years' free imports on the Yenissei and one year on the Ob were concessions also granted to the British adventurers, who, however, did not meet

[1] See parliamentary paper, Russia No. 1 (1888), *Sea Route to Siberia*, C. 5, 435.

the good fortune which yet assuredly awaits the pioneers who successfully exploit the waterway to the Russian Australia. But the jealousy of the overland traders, the protectionist instincts of the Siberians, and the *vis inertiæ* of Government departments, impeded what Sir Robert Morier described as a "commercial revolution, the importance of which can hardly be exaggerated." In his keen desire to overcome these obstacles, Sir Robert Morier allowed his son, a brilliant and promising young man, to accompany Captain Wiggins on the *Labrador*. Writing at length to Madame Novikoff from Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1888, Sir Robert Morier explained his hopes concerning the Siberian expedition in a letter which incidentally affords us a glimpse of the inner workings of that fiery soul. No wonder that Madame Novikoff wrote:—

"Captivated by Sir Robert. He is the very type of a splendid, enthusiastic Englishman of old times—that one admires and loves, and would do anything to serve his humanitarian schemes. His *success* in Russia is growing *every* day."

"The Station Hotel,
Newcastle-on-Tyne, *July* 15, 1888.

"Dear Madame Novikoff,—You will perhaps wonder at the date of this letter. You will wonder more when I explain it! I am here awaiting from hour to hour the departure of the good ship *Labrador*, commander Joseph Wiggins, for the mouth of the Yenissei, bearing with her my son—and *n.b.* my only son!

"Your letter reaching me at this moment was very welcome, because it contained a spark of sympathy

at a moment when I needed it; for I will not deny that parting from my boy on an expedition which is not altogether without risk, and which will necessarily involve absolute interruption of all possible intercourse with him, telegraphic or postal, for two months at the least, is very much like having a very big tooth drawn. Most of my friends think me mad, but I am sure, from the ring of your letter, that you will not be amongst the number. Let me explain how matters stand in a few words. My boy had been working hard for his diplomatic examination for several months, and was owed a holiday. We were to have spent it together, and it was for this purpose I came to England. But I was full of the Wiggins expedition, and when I talked of it he got magnetised, as everybody worth anything does when they come in touch with that extraordinary man, and he entreated me to let him accompany Wiggins. To do so was to give up the pleasure I had looked forward to of being with him, to face the undoubted risk of the Arctic voyage first, the 2000 miles of Yenissei afterwards, and the 3000 miles of sledging all alone from Yenisseisk to St. Petersburg in midwinter to finish up with. On the other hand, there was the making of a man out of a boy by the facing of danger; persevering roughing of the roughest kind; intercourse with real men of a humble kind, les travailleurs de la mer, instead of the wretched button-holed mashers of the drawing-room kind; and, above all, the education of associating with a man like Wiggins, actually at his daily work of fashioning out a great idea.

"Nevertheless, I should not have selected the latter alternative, or brought myself to make the sacrifice and to burthen myself with four months of unceasing anxiety, had I not believed that by doing so I should

be contributing, or at least be possibly contributing, to the work I have so foolishly set my heart upon.

"We have to face in this modern St. Georgism three hideous scaly dragons—

"1. Mistrust.

"2. The imbecilities of Tchinovnikdom.

"3. The brute hostility to all intercourse and co-operation of the pur sang Russian and Siberian Chauvinists with any one not Russian or Siberian, with the foreigner as such.

"Now as regards the first, which is the most formidable of the three, I believe that sending out my boy may go a long way to create confidence both here and in Russia, for the mistrust is equally great on both sides—our mercantile classes will not believe in the probability of success, and have refused point-blank to support the undertaking. The small company who *believe* in Wiggins and have subscribed the few shares which have enabled him to go out on his present venture are enthusiasts like myself but men of very small means, and the principal financial supporter of the enterprise, Major Gaskell, does so almost entirely *in memoriam* of his dead child. On the principle that no man is a prophet in his own country, I found that Wiggins was hardly known and not at all appreciated here. My arrival here with my boy has caused quite a sensation, and what I have been able to tell them about Wiggins has been a perfect revelation to them. I have already given him a perfectly different *status*, and if this year's expedition succeeds, the attention I have called to the question will, I am assured, secure all the mercantile support needed next year.

"As regards Russian distrust, I cannot but believe that a British Ambassador sending out his son en touriste with the expedition ought to go some way to

prove that *he* at least regards the *route* as a safe and normal one. But I confess that I am at times ass enough to hope that my doing so, and the interest I thereby prove I have in the question, may induce a humane Russian person here and there to see that my heart lies rather in schemes for bringing the two countries together by co-operation and intercommunion in the works of peace and mutual goodwill, than in the hideous nightmare of political diplomacy. I am an old Cobdenite, one of the founders of the Cobden Club, and the old ghosts will haunt me, *sie naheren sich wieder die Schwankerden Geshalten, und das alte Liedchen will mir nicht aus dem Sinn.* When I went on board the *Labrador* to-day that grand metaphor of Mr. Gladstone in those great days when he hadn't become the G.O.M. came back to me in all its vividness: 'Those ships that ply hither and thither exchanging the products of the earth amongst the dwellers on the earth, are they not the shuttles in a mighty loom weaving a tissue of peace and goodwill to join together the nations of the world?'. . .

"But that you may not lose all confidence in me and in the coherence of my reason, you may believe me when I tell you that the moments when these foolish dreams substitute themselves for the blessed realities of Blood and Iron are very rare indeed, and only occur on extraordinary occasions like to-night, when, my boy having turned in to the last bed he will occupy for many a night, I am indulging in the extravagances of writing a foolish letter and of drinking a solitary whisky Toddy.

"But to get back to my sheep. I cannot hope that my voyage will do much as regards No. 2, except that it may make my friends work more heartily in trying to circumvent the Tchinovniks.

"As regards No. 3, nothing God, man, or devil could do would influence them.

"And now j'ai vidé mon sac. You will think it very odd that I should send you this very long letter; but as a woman you will probably understand the reason why. I am conscious I am doing an extraordinarily foolish thing, which will produce *none* of the results I would desire it to produce—probably just the opposite results. The wind is howling through the chimney-pots—the glass going down and indicating a gale. I see vividly before me the great icebergs rising in the distance, the rapids and cataracts of the Yenissei, the bear expedition on the Tundra, the 3000 miles of desolate sledging in the midwinter nights, etc. etc.

"Well, then, good-bye.

"ROBERT B. MORIER."

Sir Robert was always afraid of being misunderstood, and was nervously alarmed lest he should reveal his better nature to any one.

He wrote on another occasion :—

"Pray don't think I identify Russia with Russian red tape. If I did, I should shrink up into a conventional diplomatist. It is because I have discovered the Russian under the Tartar, instead of Napoleon's Tartar under the Russian, that I am interested in him and inclined to become very fond of him, unless he makes too great a fool of himself and turns on my Wiggins, in which case I turn on him."

Madame Novikoff shared Morier's admiration for Captain Wiggins. She wrote of him :—

"I feel perfectly certain no honest being can learn to know that great Columbus of our days without being entirely taken by him."

Sir Robert Morier was absolutely intoxicated with his enthusiasm for Captain Wiggins. "He is the second MAN I have ever come across in this long life of mine. The first died shortly after I had discovered him, thirty years ago"—the other MAN of the nineteenth century Sir Robert Morier left unnamed.

Wiggins had given up everything he had in the world to this idea—his whole fortune, all his prospects in life, his best twelve years of strength and energy. Sir Robert Morier wrote to Madame Novikoff on August 7, 1888, appealing to her to help him with the Governor-General of Siberia, Count Ignatieff, and supporting his appeal by a masterly exposition of the benefits certain to accrue from the development of the oversea route to Siberia. He concluded as follows :—

"If the pioneers come to grief because Russia won't take the hand held out to her in the simple-hearted faith of a true hero and king of men like Wiggins, I for one will retire from the thankless task of trying to bring together two great nations whom God has intended to be friends; for we are here not on the cursed ground of politics, but of *humanity*; and if we can find no common ground here, there is no common ground between us. Only remember it is the friend of Kinglake, not the Ambassador, who writes."

The stars in their courses fought against the gallant adventurers. Sir Robert Morier, stout-hearted though he was, found it a relief to pour his lamentation into the sympathetic ear of Madame Novikoff. The season was the worst for fifty years, the *Phœnix* was hopelessly stranded on her way to meet the *Labrador*, not a ton of cargo could be shipped, and,

CAPTAIN WIGGINS.
Opener of the Seagate of Siberia.

to add to Sir Robert's dismay, his son Victor had left the *Labrador* in the Kara Sea in order to go bear-hunting with a nomad tribe of Samoyedes, and nothing had been heard of him for weeks. He laments :—

" I have found the most profound apathy, not to say want of sympathy, here (in St. Petersburg), and I believe every one thinks it patriotic to be pleased at this fiasco."

This was written under the stress of the first news. The Russians had more pressing business to think of than the opening of the sea-gate of Siberia. On October 24 the Tsar's train was derailed at Borki in the Caucasus ; nineteen persons were killed and many injured, but the Imperial Family escaped almost unhurt. Sir Robert Morier was as much affected by the miraculous escape of the Tsar as any of his subjects. He wrote to Madame Novikoff on November 6 :—

" This terrible catastrophe has so entirely engrossed all our thoughts that I have had none for anything else. You will see all the details in the papers. But what you will not see in the papers is the touching and noble manner in which the extreme peril of the Tsar and his family, and the miraculous manner of their escape, has brought out in all its reality the heart bond between the ruler and his people. I was present at the reception (and, strangely enough, Lady Morier and I alone of the corps diplomatique) of the Tsar at the railway station on Sunday, and I never witnessed such a sight or myself felt so deeply moved."

Sir Robert Morier's spirits revived, and he soon returned to the attack. Captain Wiggins, with whom Madame Novikoff was in frequent correspondence,

spent a good deal of 1889 in lecturing up and down Great Britain upon the new route to the Northern Golconda. Victor Morier emerged safely from the wilds of Siberia, and afterwards volunteered for military service under the South African Chartered Company at Beira.

Sir Robert persevered with dogged resolution in the Siberian enterprise. On September 16/28, 1889, he wrote as follows :—

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—You will, I am sure, be glad to learn that, in the face of the most transhuman difficulties, our good friend Wiggins did succeed in leaving England on the 4th of August in command of the good ship *Labrador* with a most respectable cargo on board; that an expedition consisting of tugs and lighters, owned and freighted by *native Siberians*, left Yenisseisk on the 27th of August to meet the *Labrador* and bring back her cargo; that the two expeditions—the ocean and the river—were to have met on the 13th instant; and that, if neither of them have gone down to the bottom, the great question of opening up Siberia to the commerce of the world and the prospective doubling of the value to Russia of a bienfonds —three times the size of Europe, crammed with wealth of every kind—will be a fait accompli.

"It would be too long a story to recount how all this was brought about, but what is of real importance is that the new expedition, which was got up at a moment's notice and when there was scarcely more than a week to charter the *Labrador* and get a cargo, is entirely unconnected either with the unfortunate *Phœnix* merchant adventurers, who are in liquidation, or with the Stock-job Speculators, who got poor old Wiggins (a mere child in business) to lend his name to

a public joint-stock undertaking, which they tried to promote in order to put money into their pockets, and which proved, thank God, a complete fiasco."

On October 11, 1890, Sir Robert Morier wrote a letter to Madame Novikoff condoling with her on the death of her husband, and informing her that his son Victor had been promoted in four weeks to be full corporal, concluding as follows :—

" My second bit of news you are more immediately interested in, viz. the complete success of my Siberian expedition. The little syndicate I succeeded in creating in London, composed of our very best names (Lord Wenlock, chairman ; Albert Grey, vice-chairman ; William Grenfell ; and others of the same type), were able, with funds collected amongst my friends, to fit out *two* ships and a first-rate tug-boat. The ships have returned safe from Karaoul, having exchanged cargoes there with Lee's flotilla, and the tug is tugging the valuable freight sent out in the ships to Yenisseisk."

Sir Robert was a merry man at times, given to jesting even in his correspondence. Here, for instance, is a letter of his, apparently written to Madame Novikoff during his sojourn in London in the summer of 1888. It is addressed: "Son Altesse Madame la Princesse Regente de Macedo-Bulgarie," and may be quoted as a specimen of his raillery :—

" Dear Princess,—As I feel quite certain that within a very few years the Rights of Women in Russia will have, by a process of natural evolution, worked up to a point where men will have to retire from public life, and that in the improved state of political society which will result therefrom only the really worthy will fill great offices, I am ready to make a

large bet that you will be selected for the vacant throne of Bulgaria, to which your successful agitation will by that time, with the assistance of some of your bright young men,—Gladstone, Villiers, and others,—have annexed Macedonia. I therefore prospectively address you in the name you are destined to bear."

Like all who knew him intimately enough to pierce through his somewhat rugged manner, I had a great regard and affection for Sir Robert Morier. When I was in Russia in 1888 I wrote under Sir Robert Morier's kindly supervision the earlier letters which were subsequently republished under the title of *Truth about Russia*. How often I have regretted that I had no stenographer with me to preserve the store of reminiscence with which he used to keep me fascinated till all hours of the morning. I was lunching in the Embassy when Sir Robert received the news of the death of the Emperor Frederick and the accession of the present Kaiser.

Sir Robert Morier was a vehement Free Trader, and there were few who shared his views in Russia. But he did find one man, General Ignatieff, who was entirely in agreement with him as to the political importance of closer trade relations between England and Russia. None of the Russian statesmen to whom I was introduced by Madame Novikoff impressed me more than General Ignatieff, the author of the Treaty of San Stefano. I found him one of the most interesting, entertaining, and capable men I ever met. Like Madame Novikoff, he was a devoted Pan-Slavist, and not less devoted to the Anglo-Russian entente. His observations upon that subject are full of interest to-day, for General Ignatieff saw very clearly then, what many people in England hardly realised till the

other day, that Russia and England are economically complemental to each other, whereas Germany and England are economic rivals. General Ignatieff was in 1888 the President of the Society of Trade and Commerce, and his opinions upon the possibility of an Anglo-Russian Treaty of Commerce are well worth recalling to-day :—

"There is nothing I desire more heartily," said General Ignatieff, "than good relations between England and Russia ; and not only good relations political and diplomatic, but commercial and industrial. Why, for instance, should we not have a Treaty of Commerce with England, based on intelligible principles ? For the last ten years I have never ceased to advocate the alteration of our commercial treaties on a basis which would have tended directly to draw us closer to England."

What hope was there, I asked, that with Russia anything of the kind would be possible ?

"Not only possible, but easy," he said, "provided that you once grasp the right principle, and that we are friends instead of foes. The wrong principle is that of the most-favoured-nation clause, which finds a place in all our commercial treaties, and which secures to every nation, regardless of its commercial policy in relation to us, the maximum advantages given to the nation which from motives of policy or of trade we wish to favour most. The right principle is the principle of discrimination, by which we should treat those nations well which treat us well, and *vice versa*."

I discussed the question with M. Wischnegradsky, then Minister of Finance, and General Annenkoff, who built the Central Asian railway.

General Annenkoff said "that no two countries had more need of each other than England and Russia,

or less risk of rivalry in the commercial world. It is different with Germany; over and over again I was told during my stay in St. Petersburg that the new development of German competition would sooner or later compel England to open her eyes to the fact that the German, instead of being her staunchest ally, is now her most formidable competitor."

"In the last dozen years," said General Ignatieff, "Germany has taken a new departure. You have no longer to do with the old Germany, which was largely agricultural, free-trading, and pacific; you are face to face with a new Germany, militant, aggressive, and colonising, which confronts you in every market in Europe, in every continent in the Old World and the New, and which is undermining your industrial and commercial supremacy. Germany aspires to be a great colonial and a great commercial Power. If she succeeds, it will be at the expense of England. You will wake up too late to discover the truth of what I tell you."

One of the Russian ministers said that it was with none of their goodwill that Germany was absorbing their foreign trade: "In Siberia, bad German knives marked as English are ousting all others from our markets. That is not what we wish. We wish to develop our commerce with England. It would be all for our interest to do so. Why not?"

Why not indeed? At the Ministry of Finance I met a very intelligent, outspoken official who answered the question at once. He said "that the idea in theory was excellent, but the difficulties of its application were considerable. The whole question," he pointed out, "was dominated by the political relations of the different Powers. The adoption of General Ignatieff's policy might be possible, provided that we were friends with England; but not otherwise. For

what would it practically come to if it were adopted? We should have to denounce all our existing treaties and begin, *de novo*, to construct a new commercial system, which would, broadly speaking, admit English goods into Russia at a lower rate of duty than that levied on imports from Germany. Now, I do not want to say anything hostile to anybody, but if you think that such a change would not be very keenly resented at Berlin you must have studied with very little advantage the history of the last fifteen years of German politico-commercial policy. To put it bluntly, it would put a strain on our relations with Germany, and that we cannot afford to do unless we are assured beforehand of a stable working entente with England. It would be very pleasant, no doubt; but it is well to be on with the new love before you are off with the old, and unless you can get your dear countrymen to adopt a less antagonistic policy to Russia, I fear you may whistle for your Commercial Treaty."

Now that the old "antagonistic policy" has been formally buried at Reval, we may begin to hope for a good Commercial Treaty with Russia. It was the dream of Sir Robert Morier's later years. How often he inveighed against the insensate Russophobia against which Madame Novikoff had been waging unceasing war for thirty years!

I cannot more appropriately close this chapter than by quoting the following characteristic outburst, which I took down from the lips of our Great Ambassador. I had been developing the familiar thesis of Madame Novikoff, that by our insane indulgence in the cult of an archaic and obsolete prejudice we were barring against ourselves the gates of what might be our best market in Europe, when Sir Robert Morier exclaimed :—

" You are perfectly right ; the commercial question is dominated by the political. You in England have to choose whether you prefer to be doing good business with the Russian or to be perpetually sticking pins into his side. You can do either one or the other ; you cannot do both. The more I see of this country the more I am lost in amazement and indignation at the spectacle which it presents. With Siberia and the Caucasus it is almost as vast a mine of undeveloped wealth as the United States of America. It literally teems with all the raw material, the undeveloped potentialities, of wealth. Its population is barely sufficient to till the soil, but it can produce grain enough to feed all Europe. The country, however, has at present neither the men nor the money for the development of its enormous resources. England is bursting with capital seeking in vain for profitable employment, and every profession is overrun with men who might find ample opportunity for employing their energies in opening up Russia. The two empires supplement each other. Each has everything the other wants. But because of this cursed habit of snapping and snarling at each other's heels, this religious or irreligious cult of the devil of national prejudice and animosity, the relations between them dwindle, and they are gradually drifting into an attitude of increasing isolation. The Russian peasant cannot feed the London artisan, nor can the Sheffield cutlers sell their knives to the Russian peasant, because why ? Because a set of God-forsaken wretches with pens in their hands in Petersburg and in London keep on day after day gibing at each other, maligning each other, and imputing all manner of evil against England or against Russia, until on each side it begins to be believed that their first duty to each other is

not to exchange products for manufactures, and establish good relations based upon mutual interchange of surplus commodities, but to exchange insults and to prepare to interchange shots. If Jomini would hang all the editors in the interests of peace, I would offer them all up as a burnt-offering on the altar of Trade."

CHAPTER XII.

1891–1892. Jews and Famine.

MADAME NOVIKOFF has always been cautious and exact in making statements on her own account. But sometimes she was the recipient of extraordinary items of gossip, on which her usual comment was, "Important, if true." One of these stories she sent me in the year 1891, but the letter is not dated:—

"I got a very curious letter from Berlin this morning which tells me that during his last visit to England the German Emperor discussed the possibilities of the British throne being upset by the progress of Radical and Socialist principles in England, and offered the services of German troops to the Queen and the Prince of Wales if at any time the Monarchy were in danger!"

The Kaiser is capable de tout, but this surely is just a little too much even for him.

The year 1891 found plenty of work for Madame Novikoff in two very different directions. In the first she was the defender of Russia against the attacks of the Jews, and in the other she appealed to the British public in the name of charity for the victims of the terrible famine which raged in the south-west provinces in the winter of 1891–92.

But before she touched either of these questions,

she had something to say upon another subject which at that time was only beginning to attract public attention.

On February 9, 1891, Mr. Gladstone called at Claridge's Hotel, and had a long talk with Madame Novikoff. He told her that I was going to reprint some of his (Mr. Gladstone's) letters to her, and that he had not the slightest reason in the world for refusing his consent :—

"We had a long discussion about Finland. I said that I had so many facts about the question that nothing could be easier than to write about it; but since Stead's departure I felt I could not go on contributing to that paper, as his successor made all sorts of operations upon my articles.

"'What a mistake!' he exclaimed, with the indignation of youth. 'Why, it is your greatest power to speak plainly, and nothing is more useful to us than to have a complete idea of your attitude in the matter.'"

Madame Novikoff, notwithstanding her reluctance, contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* a statement of the Russian case against Finland. Briefly stated, it amounts to this: that Finland imposed almost prohibitory duties upon Russian goods, while Finnish goods entered Russia duty free; that the Russian language was not permitted either in the Tribunals or in official intercourse; that the Russian Governor-General had practically no power, and that small Finnish officials considered themselves beyond the reach of the Russian Government. But the question of infinitely greater consequence than all others was that of an anti-Orthodox propaganda which was being smuggled into Russia *via* Finland.

Madame Novikoff has always cultivated friendly relations with individual Jews from Auerbach, Monte-

fiore to Dr. Max Nordau, but she has combined with this an uncompromising hostility to all those who complain of the position of the Talmudist Jews in the Russian Empire—I say the Talmudist Jews, for the Karaite Jews express her own sentiments on the Jewish question, and share with the Russians all their privileges and rights.

Madame Novikoff has never committed herself to any detailed defence of the Russian laws relating to the Jews. Her forays into the field of controversy were strictly limited to the object which has always governed her political and journalistic activity. Seeing that the treatment of the Jews was being industriously employed as a means of inflaming English sentiment against Russia, she intervened in the interest of the entente for which she was working in order to (1) minimise the alleged ill-treatment of the Jews, contradicting false statements and putting the best construction upon admitted facts; (2) to say, with an infinite number of degrees of civil incivility, that perhaps the world would not exactly go to rack and ruin if foreign friends of the Jews were to mind their own business; (3) to intimate that "a great military Power, having at her disposal an army of two millions of well-disciplined and drilled soldiers, whom no European country dares to attack single-handed, can face calmly and even good-humouredly both the wild attacks of unscrupulous publicists and mistaken protests of philanthropic meetings though these be as imposing and brilliant as the Lord Mayor's show itself."

Her first début on the Jewish question was in January 1882, when she addressed two letters to the *Times*, which were confined to a protest against the accusation that the Russian Government was

guilty of encouraging the excesses of the social war which was then raging between the Jews and their neighbours in the southern provinces. She quoted Lord Granville's authority to prove the baselessness of this charge, brought forward in evidence of the action taken by the Government in that case to repress the riots, and argued that the origin of the outrages, which she neither defended nor denied, was economic rather than religious. She admitted that the worst offences charged against the Jews did not justify outrage and murder, but "they explain what otherwise would be utterly incredible." And she sardonically congratulated the Jews upon having at last discovered that murder and outrage were not the mere peccadilloes which they held them to be when, in the face of fifty times worse atrocities in the Balkan, the Jews throughout Europe did their utmost to support the Turk.

Therein Madame Novikoff touched a sore point. During the great uprising of the human conscience against the Ottoman Turk in 1876–78 the Jews as a whole acted against the cause of liberation. It is true that here and there a Jew like Sergeant Simon supported Mr. Gladstone, but he was the exception proving the rule. What Mr. Freeman was wont grimly to describe as "the sympathy of the circumcision," stimulated by the resentment felt by the Jews against the Slavs, caused the crusaders of 1876, like their predecessors centuries before, to regard Turk and Jew as equally enemies of the Christian cause. Among Mr. Gladstone's papers I found an impassioned appeal sent for his information, in which the Jews were adjured to make common cause with the Turks against the Russians. If the Jews but did their duty, not a Russian soldier would be allowed to cross the lands of the

Pale. They did not do their duty in that sense, or else the Russian armies would never have crossed the Danube. But there is no doubt that the desire of Jewry to injure Russia, whom they regarded as their oppressor, entirely obscured the sympathy which they might otherwise have felt for the massacred Bulgarians. Hence, where you found a Jew in those days, you usually found if not a pro-Turk at least an anti-Russian. That held true even when, as in the case of Lord Beaconsfield, the Jew had been a christened child, or as in the case of Levy of the *Daily Telegraph* he had abandoned his tribal name. So general was the belief that philo-Turkism had its origin in Semitic race sympathy, that people used often to ask me whether the Russophobist Joseph Cowen of the *Newcastle Chronicle* was not really a Cohen !

Another point made by Madame Novikoff was that if the English had as many Jews as the Russians, we should be much better able to understand their point of view :—

" It may be wrong to dislike the Jews, but if two and a half million Chinese were monopolising all the best things in Southern England, and were multiplying even more rapidly than the natives of the soil, perhaps the cry, ' England for the English,' would not be so unpopular as some of our censors seem to think."

That was written in January 1882. Three months later Mr. Freeman wrote to her as follows, after his return from his lecturing tour in America (April 29, 1882) :—

" The case of the Jews in Russia (as in Servia, Roumania, etc.) is very much that of the Chinese in America, against whom Congress was legislating when I was there ; only the President vetoed the Bill.

The difference is that the Chinese do not command half the Press of the world, as the Jews do. Therefore when a maddened Russian punches a Jew's head, it goes forth to all the world as 'frightful religious persecution,' while, when a maddened Californian punches a Chinaman's head, nobody thinks that is because he believes in Buddha or Fo. But mind, while I hold that every nation has a right to legislate against foreigners (Jews, Chinese, or any other) who make themselves nuisances, I don't go in for outrages done by anybody against anybody."

Such considerations as these somewhat damped down the agitation which the Jews had got up. Madame Novikoff was much abused and misrepresented. Because she had exposed exaggerations and proved that the Russian Government was not an accomplice in the crimes which it had punished with the utmost severity, she was accused of sympathising with murder and outrage. On the other hand, M. Aksakoff and many of her friends in Russia were angry at the "hesitating tone" of her letter in the *Times*.

In a parting letter to the *Times*, Madame Novikoff maintained that "every Russian regrets that the Jews have been plundered, but to us it is as clear as day that the permanently oppressed and the permanently plundered is not the Jew but the Christian. The landlordism of which your Irish farmers complain is but a pale shadow of the cruel servitude enforced on our peasants by the Jews. The disorders both in the Ukraine and in Ireland are social and agrarian." She continued :—

"The Jewish question is not religious, but social. Englishmen ought to understand it, for they have to

deal very often with the same difficulties in India. An Anglo-Indian Member of Parliament, of great eminence as an administrator in Bengal, was kind enough to lend me the other day an interesting Blue-book on the riots in the Deccan, from which I learn that the most innocent agriculturists in India have repeatedly attacked the Hindoo money-lenders exactly as our peasants attacked our Jews, and for the same reason. And how did you deal with this difficulty? Not by increasing the licence, but by restricting the opportunities of the Hindoo money-lenders; and as you do it with some success, your example can be useful indeed. In short, you do as General Ignatieff proposed to do in his famous rescript which you abuse so much. You seek to remove the cause of the disorder by protecting the peasants against the extortionate practices of the village usurers. If we are wrong, is it not a case of the mote and the beam?"

The mote and the beam and the *tu quoque* figure very conspicuously in Madame Novikoff's polemics. The question slumbered till 1890, when a renewed outburst of violence in the south-west provinces of Russia led to a revival of the Jewish agitation in other countries.

In London the Jews as usual masked their initiative behind Christian sympathisers. Archbishops and dukes and Members of Parliament signed a requisition which was then presented by the Jews to the Lord Mayor calling for a public meeting in the Guildhall, "to give public expression of opinion respecting the renewed persecutions to which millions of the Jewish race are subjected in Russia, under the yoke of severe and exceptional edicts and disabilities." The Lord Mayor, nothing loath, summoned the citizens to the Guildhall. Before they met,

Madame Novikoff addressed a sarcastic letter to the *Times*, suggesting that a Guildhall meeting might be more useful if it were called to criticise the squalid horrors revealed in General Booth's *Darkest England*, or to denounce the atrocities committed by Stanley's rear-guard in his march through Darkest Africa. She remarked that—

"A public meeting might be less useless if those who attended it were imbued with a little sense of responsibility, a little elementary knowledge of the facts, and a little experience of the difficulties of the case with which they propose to deal."

Then, with a burst of frankness, she exclaimed: "Russians are too much accustomed to abuse from abroad for any one greatly to care what twaddlers may say, even in the sacred precincts of the Guildhall."

And she warned the City of London that the only consequence of this proclamation of the Lord Mayor and the citizens for the Russian Jews would lead to a great immigration to the "new Land of Canaan in the City of London." The passage of the Aliens Act before another dozen years had passed justified the wisdom of a warning which was bitterly resented at the time.

This method of treating the question brought down upon Madame Novikoff a multitude of assailants. Mr. Oswald J. Simon described her as "one whom the whole Jewish race recognised as their bitterest enemy," an accusation which she disclaimed; for, as a Greek Orthodox, she is ordered to love her enemies; but she is obliged to defend truth. The Jews regarded her as their enemy, and as they were under the *lex talionis*, they assailed her without mercy. Nothing daunted, she stuck to her guns, and sent off another letter, dated November 26, to the *Times*, denouncing the

Guildhall meeting as a great political and humanitarian blunder. "It is simply madness to imagine that the Russian Government needs advice or guidance from the Guildhall." And she hinted not obscurely that the only answer they could expect to their representations was: "Mind your own business, and don't interfere in things you don't understand."

This epistle provoked an angry response dated December 3 from the Duke of Westminster, who gave himself away by trying to draw a parallel between the St. James's Hall meeting of 1876 and the Guildhall meeting of 1890. Madame Novikoff instantly replied, December 7, pointing out that the St. James's Hall meeting was a protest against the anti-Christian policy of Lord Beaconsfield.[1] The conveners acted "for the honour of their own country, in necessary recognition of agreements, conventions, and treaties binding England to the Sick Man, which rendered the former responsible for the latter's performance of promised reforms." In the case of the Jews, England had no *locus standi*, nor had she any responsibility for the internal affairs of the Russian Empire. Madame Novikoff concluded her letter by a significant reference to the indifference of a great military power with two millions of armed men at her back to the "unscrupulous legends and calumnies of the Jewish Press."

The meeting was held in due course on December 10. The Memorial to the Russian Emperor was unanimously carried and sent to St. Petersburg. Also in due course, February 9, the Russian Ambassador requested Lord Salisbury to return the Memorial to the Lord

[1] Mr. Froude wrote, December 7, 1890 :—

"Buckle, whom I met on Sunday, seemed fully aware of the value to his pages of your contributions. A sparring match between you and a Duke delights the public if not protracted too long."

Mayor unanswered and, according to Madame Novikoff, unread.[1]

"Women, when their hearts are too full, when their nerves are overstrained, indulge in a good cry. Englishmen, when their nervous system is upset, find their chief consolation in speechifying at public meetings." So Madame Novikoff commented upon

[1] *Punch* published an amusing parody suggested by this letter, entitled "Portia à la Russe," of which the following lines will suffice as a sample:—

"PORTIA À LA RUSSE."

"The quality of mercy is o'erstrained,
It droppeth twaddle-like from Lord Mayor's lips
Upon a Russian ear: strength is twice scornful,
Scornful of him it smites, and him who prates
Of mercy for the smitten: force becomes
The thronèd monarch better than chopped logic;
His argument's two millions of armed men,
Which strike with awe and timidity
Prating philanthropy that pecks at kings . . .

And Jews gregarious. *These* do pray for Mercy
Whose ancient Books instruct us all to render
Eye-for-eye justice! Most impertinent!
Romanist Marquis, Presbyterian Duke,
And Anglican Archbishop mustered up
With Tabernacular Tubthumper, gowned Taffy,
And broad-burred Boanerges from the North,
Mingled with Pantheist bards, Agnostic Peers,
And lawyers latitudinarian,—
A Lord Mayor's Show of Paul Pry pageantry,
All to play Mentor to the Muscovite!
Master of millions! Oh most monstrous!
Are we Turk dogs that we should do this thing?
In name of Mercy!!!

I have writ so much,
As Adler says, with 'dainty keen-edged dagger,'
To mitigate humanity's indignation
With airy epigram, and show old friends,
Gladstone and Westminster, MacColl and Stead,
That Olga Novikoff is still O.K.
A Portia—*à la Russe!* Have I not proved it?"

the Guildhall meeting, but she might perhaps have been a little less scornful in her comments upon our nervous system if she had remembered what good service that mode of relief had rendered to the Slavs in the agitation of 1876. But her main point in this somewhat embittered polemic was sound. The worse we think of the Russian Government and of Russian popular prejudice the sounder it appears to be. If Russia were a stupid, well-meaning sheep, which had unintentionally sat down upon a poor innocent Jew, it might be safe to pull its ears; but if Russia be a savage carnivore, which has prostrated the Jew in order to maul him, it is the worst possible policy to aggravate the bear by twisting his tail or flinging stink-pots at his head.

The controversy attracted a good deal of attention abroad. Bernard Munz, in his *Literarische Physiognien*, published a character sketch of Madame Novikoff (Leipzig, 1903) in which he made a serious reply to her indictment against the Jews.

Madame Novikoff fired a parting shot after the Guildhall meeting, asking if "the Alien race seems determined to take up a domineering position, replacing our laws and customs by its own, is it not our duty to become more determined and energetic than ever in our policy of self-defence?" She referred to the way in which the innocent children of the Celestial Empire were being hunted out of America and Australia, although they asked only for liberty to "live in peace, and work for their rice and their rats." The grotesque notion that "one word from the Tsar would abolish the miseries of the Russian Jews for ever," probably explains, if it does not justify, the holding of these objurgatory meetings; but a very little experience of human nature might teach their

promoters that foreign Governments will not be coerced by resolutions passed by public meetings exclusively attended by those whose hatred of the foreign Government in question is equalled by their ignorance of the circumstances of the country and its people.

Madame Novikoff collected her letters to the Press and republished them in a shilling pamphlet, *The Philo-Jewish Meeting at the Guildhall—Some Letters by Olga Novikoff* (*O. K.*). Incidentally it may be noticed that with a prodigality of combativeness Madame Novikoff, not content with making bitter enemies of the Jews, filled up her pamphlet by a vehement attack upon "the proselytising and persecuting policy of Rome."

Notwithstanding the offence which she had given to the Jews by her letters to the *Times*, Dr. Max Nordau dedicated to her his play, *The Right to Love*, in a very characteristic preface :—

"My gracious Friend,—When I write your name in the preface to this book, it is because, in your kindness of heart and excess of modesty, you assure me that you do not think the play unworthy of you. Therefore I beg you not to look on my dedication as in any way presumptuous, but as a testifying, however inadequately, to my admiration for your spirit, disposition, and character.

"Wherever *The Right to Love* has been staged in Germany—not very often, indeed, as yet—it has met with the most favourable reception. Serious and important journals have praised it with little reservation or even without any.

"Allow me, my gracious friend, to salute you with all respect. Max Nordau.

"The Right to Love is at least a better thing than the Right to Hate."

Leaving the Jews, I now turn to the subject of the Famine. Madame Novikoff wrote me on September 25, 1891 :—

"The distress in Russia is really terrible.

"Nothing would help an entente between Russia and England so much as a token of true sympathy in the shape of a subscription in aid of our starving provinces."

She threw herself with all her soul into the collection of money for the relief of the sufferers.

Several funds were started, but that which yielded most money and was applied with the best results was started by the Society of Friends. The Friends were those friends in need who are friends indeed. They invited Madame Novikoff to attend their meeting in Devonshire House, in order to give them information concerning the famine, and to consult with her as to the best method of relieving the distress. To this day Madame Novikoff has the liveliest recollection of the curious sensation she felt when she was ushered into the room in the centre of which, round a green baize-covered table, sat the leading members of this admirable religious Society, whose members have ever sought to serve God by doing good to their fellow-men. Madame Novikoff was in a place where the liberty of speech had always been accorded to women, and although she never addresses public meetings, she found no difficulty in delivering her message. The Friends listened to her with grave respect, and decided to take immediate action. A

large fund was raised, and several of their most experienced members were sent out to supervise its distribution.

Fifteen years afterwards, when I visited the famine-smitten districts, I found the memory of these beneficent Friends held in grateful reverence by the people whom they had helped in their hour of stress and starvation.

Madame Novikoff's action was not regarded with much favour in high quarters.

Madame de Staal (the Russian Ambassadress) called upon Madame Novikoff, and began talking about the horrors of the famine. "Unfortunately," said she, "the Emperor has prohibited any foreign contribution. 'Russian calamities,' said His Majesty, 'must be mitigated and conquered by the Russians themselves. Nobody else.'"

That was positive enough. But by a strange coincidence, that same day Madame Novikoff received an anonymous letter with a £5 note, accompanied by a line: "For the Russian Famine." This seemed to her, as an indication from above, that her personal efforts and help were needed, and that despite any prohibition, however august.

How could she keep the money without acknowledging it in the papers, since the sender withheld name and address? This she did the next day, and thus was laid the foundation of a generous and spontaneous contribution from English sympathisers to her son's Famine Fund in Russia.

During that time Madame Novikoff had many very touching and unforgettable experiences.

One of the early contributions was a letter from Woolwich containing 2s. 3½d. and a few extremely pathetic lines:—

"I am an old soldier who fought in the Crimean War. I was badly wounded and made prisoner. The kindness shown to me by the Russians at that time was so great that I determined to help them whenever I had the chance. The enclosed sum is all I possess at present. Please accept it for your poor famished peasants."

Madame Novikoff, deeply moved, showed that letter to some friends where she was lunching. People made no remark, and she thought that she would have to satisfy herself with the Woolwich contribution. But English people are better in deeds than in words, of which they are sometimes somewhat sparing. Her host, conducting her to the carriage, quietly gave her a sealed envelope.

"Let me follow the example of your Woolwich soldier," said he. "Here is my little contribution. Open the envelope on reaching your hotel."

That little contribution was—£50!

Another time she received an envelope with wide black edges. Inside—£3 and three words: "From an orphan."

On another occasion she was greatly surprised and puzzled by getting a letter containing twenty shillings and twenty names, with only one address.

According to her rule, she immediately wrote to that single address, begging the sender to express her grateful thanks to the remaining nineteen donors who had omitted to designate their abode.

A post card came in response:—

"All right. We all belong to the same company. We are all cab-drivers."

Could anything have been more touching? Was

it not a revelation of unexpected sympathy in those times of antagonism to Russia?

Altogether, the contributions sent to Madame Novikoff for her son's Committee amounted to £2000.

Needless to say that she published, in the *Moscow Gazette*, a detailed account of this generous outburst of sympathy. The greater part of the money was subscribed by the English.

Disregarding the objection taken to any appeal to foreign charity, Madame Novikoff published in the English press the following letter, dated Claridge's Hotel, December 31, 1891 :—

"In international intercourse, the predominant principle is that of give and take. Anybody who cares to study history may get easily convinced that Russia has always been particularly anxious to remember every kind turn done to her. She could never 'startle the world with her ingratitude.' On the contrary, she not only invariably returned the capital of gratitude, but willingly added a large percentage for every loan; unaided, she remains quite free from any obligation. To become a friend and ally of Russia means to strengthen one's own position and to guarantee one's future. Ingratitude implies a meanness of character incompatible with our moral standard. Those who understand thoroughly what gratitude means are naturally hesitating in accepting help.

"But private charity has quite a different meaning. Separate individuals, sympathising with our misfortune and sharing with us whatever they can, are doing a Christian work for which every Russian is heartily obliged. Private committees are founded all over Russia. The central St. Petersburg Com-

mittee is presided over by our Heir Apparent, and the Moscow Committee by our Emperor's sister-in-law—the greatly beloved Grand Duchess Serge.

"Thus, anybody who wants to help, not with some concealed political object, but simply as a Christian, in God's name, can offer his help, and be assured that his offering will live in our memories with heartfelt gratitude.

"For my part, I can only express my gratitude for every farthing given on behalf of our famine sufferers, and assure my helpers that every penny will actually first be turned into a loaf of bread, and later on—when, instead of our present ordeal, God will favour us with a plentiful harvest—into something to feed the mind and the soul of our grateful peasants.

"OLGA N."

The special commissioner of the *Week's News* thus reported, February 27, 1892, on the work of the Committee formed by M. Alexander Novikoff for the relief of the sufferers from famine:—

"At Novo Alexandroffka I looked over the books of the district of which these villages form part. It comprises twenty-five villages, with a total of 60,000 inhabitants. How many of these are relieved by the authorities cannot be said, but M. Novikoff's Committee has supplemented the efforts of the Government by feeding 10,436 persons during the month of January. Each one of these 10,436 persons was the recipient of twenty-five pounds of flour.

"According to the inventories made of the possessions of every inhabitant of the district, the number of destitute, unprovided for by Government relief, will increase by more than 1000 a month, and will reach 18,000 by June. The Committee has already

ALEXANDER NOVIKOFF (SASHA).
The son of Madame Novikoff.

distributed 650,000 pounds of flour since its institution. As many Britons have aided this work by funds sent to Madame Olga Novikoff, it will interest them to know what is doing.

"In the village of Novo Alexandroffka no one is in receipt of relief. Thanks to M. Novikoff, who has endowed it with elementary, secondary, and adult schools, it is a particularly happy village, and counts 800 teetotallers in a population of 900 persons.

"Before leaving the Tamboff Government, I may say, that although in certain villages the want is appalling, and is rendered more palpable by the condition in which the inhabitants live, I do not anticipate an overwhelming disaster in this province. It is well served by railway lines, though the companies have little rolling stock, and grain can be easily conveyed to these central Governments if it is in the country and has been brought to some available spot before the thaw."

One of the most useful forms of relief was the establishment of large ovens where sometimes bread was baked for 1000 men who came from all the country round.

Among other subscribers to the Famine Fund was Mr. Gladstone, from whom Madame Novikoff received the following letters in the early months of 1892 :—

"1 Carlton Gardens, *March* 12, 1892.

"Dear Madame Novikoff,—Your great country has been much in my thoughts ; alas ! almost wholly of late, in conjunction with pain.

"I have corresponded with Sir Robert Morier about the famine. He has been most kind, and has thought, and told me much. As there could not be

a great organisation, after failing in the effort to get a small one, I could only send my personal subscription to Sir Robert Morier. God help your poor people.

"I thank you so much for the tea, which I know to be a rare delicacy. If you are so good as to call, the earliest hour the better.—Ever yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

"1 CARLTON GARDENS, *May* 14, 1892.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—When I was so unmannerly about your wish for a subscription to the Famine Fund, I had just before given as much as I thought I could; but the account of the American Minister's appeal touches me again, and I now beg you to put in the proper channel the two small sums within, only coming to £35 (£25 and £10): how poor a driblet. May God move the hearts of men to mitigate this great affliction, and turn the issue of it all to good.—Believe me sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Mr. Froude's allusion to the famine was characteristic:—

"*April* 22, 1892.

"We hear less of your famine, so I hope you got control of it. Pity your Alexander was ever tempted into Emancipation. While your poor peasants were serfs they belonged to somebody who had an interest in preserving them. They are left now to benevolence. Carlyle (he alone) always foretold how it would be."

I close this chapter with a letter in which Madame Novikoff gives a pleasant glimpse of her country place, which was the scene of her son's charitable exertions during the famine:—

"NOVO-ALEXANDROFFKA, *June* 1, 1905.

"People seem often to be surprised at my love for our Tamboff steppes. But Novo-Alexandroffka, our country-home, has great attractions for me.

"In the first place, it possesses a beautiful church, built by my son, over the grave of his father and that of my mother, who died the following year. By the bye, I may add that my brother, my son, and myself have also our three tombs ready in the same vault.

"Secondly, there are two splendid schools, each accommodating a hundred pupils. The boys' school is named St. John's, after my husband's patron saint; and the girls' school, of which I am directress, is called St. Olga's.

"Of course it is well to have as many schools as possible, but above all ought to rank the care of providing *good* schools and *good* teachers.

"People must not forget that bad schools do more harm by their existence than does the absence of all schools.

"It is indeed wonderful to see the passionate eagerness of the peasants to have their children educated!

"I must add, that to-day I attended the final examination of the girls, and the nineteen pupils who finished their education fulfilled the requirements of the officials of the Tamboff Education Commission so brilliantly that they are all qualified to become school-teachers.

"I hope you do not find all these details wearisome. —Good-bye.—Yours, O. K."

CHAPTER XIII.

A Defender of Autocracy.

WHEN those pages were going through the press Madame Novikoff was edified and encouraged by Lord Morley's speech against Parliamentary Government—in India, and apparently in many other places outside Great Britain and Ireland.

Speaking in the House of Lords, December 17, 1908, Lord Morley said :—

"If I were attempting to set up a Parliamentary system in India, or if it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily up to the establishment of a Parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it. I do not believe, in spite of the attempts in Oriental countries at this moment—interesting attempts to which we all wish well—to set up some sort of Parliamentary system. It is no ambition of mine, at all events, to have any share in beginning that operation in India. If my existence, either officially or corporeally, were prolonged twenty times longer than either of them is likely to be, a Parliamentary system in India is not the goal to which I for one moment would aspire."

Lord Morley limits his anathema on Parliamentary Government to Asia. Mr. Froude made his anathema universal. Madame Novikoff was disposed to exempt Great Britain, on the ground

that Parliamentarism might possibly be tolerated in a country where it produced a Gladstone—now and then. But she agreed with Mr. Froude in thinking it ought not to be extended to Russia at present.

Madame Novikoff often incurred much odium in England because of her unwavering defence of the arbitrary methods employed by the Russian Government in crushing the Terrorists. She always maintained that if Englishmen were in the place of Russians, face to face with a similar crisis, they would act in the same way. This proposition was formerly denied. But it has now been proved beyond gainsaying by Lord Morley's policy in India. Madame Novikoff gratefully declared, after reading the following passage in Lord Morley's speech of December 17, 1908, that no Russian Minister had ever stated the case for the use of arbitrary arrest and exile more convincingly. The passage which particularly pleased her was the following :—

"I would like to say this about the Summary Jurisdiction Bill—I have no illusions whatever. I do not ignore—and I do not believe that the noble Marquis opposite or any one else can ignore—the frightful risks involved in transferring in any form or degree what should be the ordinary power under the law to arbitrary personal discretion. I am alive, too, to the temptations under summary procedure of various kinds, to the danger of mistaking headstrong excess of force for energy. Again, I do not for an instant forget, and I hope those who so loudly applaud legislation of this kind do not forget, the tremendous price that you pay for all operations of this sort in the reaction and the excitement that they provoke. If there is a man who knows all these

drawbacks I think I am he. But there are situations in which a responsible Government is compelled to run these risks and to pay this possible price, however high it may appear to be.

"It is like war, a hateful thing, from which, however, some of the most ardent lovers of peace, and some of those rulers of the world whose names the most ardent lovers of peace most honour and revere—it is one of the things from which these men have not shrunk. The only question for us is whether there is such a situation in India to-day as to justify the passing of the Act the other day, and to justify resort to the Regulation of 1818. I cannot imagine anybody reading the unexaggerated speeches and the list of crimes perpetrated and attempted to be perpetrated that were read out last Friday in Calcutta—I cannot imagine that anybody reading that list, and thinking what they stand for, would doubt for a single moment that summary procedure of some kind or another was justified and called for. I see abroad a tendency to criticise this legislation on grounds that strike me as extraordinary. After all, it is not our fault that we have had to bring in this measure. You must protect the lives of your officers. You must protect peaceful and harmless people, both Indian and European, from the bloodstained havoc of anarchic conspiracy. I deplore this necessity, but we are bound to face the facts. I myself recognise this necessity with infinite regret, and with something perhaps rather deeper than regret; but it is not the Government, either here or in India, who are the authors of this necessity, and I should not at all mind, if it is not impertinent and unbecoming in me to say so, standing up in another place and saying exactly what I have said here: that I approve

of these proceedings, and will do my best to support the Government of India."

Loris Melikoff could not have bettered this. M. Durnovo will probably quote it if he should ever return to power. No wonder Madame Novikoff is grateful to Lord Morley.

Her uncompromising championship of Russia caused Madame Novikoff to be regarded with scant affection by the Russian revolutionaries and their sympathisers. Among the latter were a few of her former friends and allies in the campaign against the Turk. Mr. Gladstone always preserved an attitude of strict correctitude with regard to the internal affairs of Russia. Turkey was our ward, saved from destruction by British arms and existing by virtue of a European Treaty; Russia was an independent power, and it was as monstrous for Englishmen to interfere in her domestic affairs as it would be for Russians to intermeddle with the grievances of Ireland. Some of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues, however, were not so discreet and discriminating; and among many Liberals there was frequently to be discerned an anxious desire to balance their support of Russia's policy in Turkey by a fierce and somewhat indiscriminating denunciation of Russian institutions.

Madame Novikoff deplored this tendency, and endeavoured to check it by vigorous attempts to explain the *raison d'être*, and to justify the existence of the Russian autocracy.

"The great obstacle," she always maintained, "to good understanding between England and Russia is that there is no understanding at all of each other's political views. The best service to the cause of peace, therefore, was the task of the interpreter."

chatting club, where people are obliged to make speeches, though they know very often that they have very little to say, and that they are scarcely listened to. We admire that institution of yours, but merely from a literary point of view.

"There is not one country in the world whose example could be blindly followed by Russia. Each has its drawbacks; and Russians believe they will do well to remain faithful to their own institutions. Our present Emperor has never deceived us. We want him to come into closer contact with his people—to see our wants, our shortcomings; to know the failure of some of his officials, their bad faith, and their neglect of their duties. The latter, naturally, are afraid of that close contact, and do their best (and for us their worst) to conceal facts which it is for the honour and welfare of Russia our Emperor should know. The Zemskie Sobory would answer that purpose, composed of the high clergy, nobility, and merchants. When the Tsar John the Fourth, three hundred years ago, had to give an answer to Poland, and to accept or refuse the truce proposed by the King, he consulted the Assembly, or Sobor, which rejected the truce, advised the prosecution of the war, and offered the Tsar men and money to bring it to a successful conclusion. The Zemskie Sobory played a great and interesting part in our country. To mention only one instance: in 1598, on the death of Feodor, it formed a kind of Diet, and offered Boris Godounoff the throne of Russia.

"Catherine the Great instructed the Assembly of Representatives, which she summoned to draw up the new code of laws, that the nation is not made for the Sovereign, but the Sovereign for the nation. The Autocracy is a weapon by which Democracy smites

down its enemies, and it is the instrument which, after securing the emancipation of the serf, is destined to achieve still further reforms.

"As believers in progress and in liberty, we think that more progress and more freedom is possible in Russia at the present time by placing supreme power in the hands of an enlightened autocrat than by vesting it in an assembly which either must be elected by a minority of the people or by a majority which can hardly read and write.

"Of the Zemskie Sobory so little is known in England that I may be pardoned if I explain how modest are the wishes of the Russian national party. The word *Sobor* means an assembly, a gathering; *Zemskie Sobory*, assemblies from all the land, a kind of national assembly, generally summoned when the country was in want of an honest, frank advice.

"The other day I was favoured with a call from one of your M.P.'s. My visitor looked very solemn and dignified, and spoke in a monotonous, didactic way concerning Russia and her many shortcomings. It was rather amusing at the first, for he displayed such a wonderful ignorance of the most elementary facts that he might have been taken for Robinson Crusoe, fresh from the desolate island where he spent so many years with no other company than that of his famous Friday.

"He began: 'We must keep a very sharp look out; Russia is not to be trusted. She is a standing danger to us both in India and in this country.'

"'Oh yes,' I replied, for I am now quite familiar with such pleasant observations. 'Why should you not keep a sharp look out? Only I do not see why you should think England so very weak, both in Asia

and in Europe, that she is in such danger from any foreign country.'

"'Russia is dangerous,' answered my visitor, 'because she has no Constitutional Government. We in England can only have confidence in Constitutional States.'

"'Yes, I know your views on these matters,' I replied. 'And I dare say your dear ally Turkey has prospered amazingly since she adopted your institutions!'

"'Why, of course, it's better to have a Constitution,' rejoined he. 'It makes countries strong and powerful.'

"'Then it is because you want to see Russia stronger and more powerful,' I timidly ventured to suggest, 'that you wish us to adopt a Constitution? I thought she was too strong already for your moral comfort.'"

In 1880 the Zemski Sobor was regarded by the then ruling powers in Russia as a dangerous concession to the Revolution. The Censor put *Russia and England* on the Index Expurgatorius of the Empire on account of this plea for the restoration of the Zemski Sobor.

Russia and England was the most eloquent, the most enthusiastic, and the most effective plea for Russia ever published in any language. It had commanded the admiration of the foremost statesmen and men of letters in Europe. Yet, because of this very moderately and loyally expressed plea for a Consultative Chamber, the book was condemned by the Censor. Verily the ways of a Russian Censor are sometimes past finding out.

Nine years later I published a book, *The*

United States of Europe, which was written for the express purpose of making European propaganda for the Tsar's proposal to summon a Conference on Armaments, which was held in 1899 at The Hague. When I called upon M. Mouravieff at the Foreign Office, he thanked me warmly for the book, which, he said, he thought would be of great service.

"Thank you," I said, smiling. "I hardly expected to hear that from you, for two reasons: one is, because I have taken the liberty of criticising the policy of M. Mouravieff; and secondly, because I have just been told the Censor has confiscated my book at the Post Office."

The Foreign Minister shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, the Censor!" he exclaimed, as much as to say that the Censor was past praying for. "But," he went on, "as for your criticism of my policy, I am sorry you don't agree with me; but I am the last man in the world to resent your saying so. I will tell you a story. When I was a little secretary at our Paris Embassy, it was sometimes my duty to take round articles for insertion in the press. Of course, you know, it is a very simple affair of business. So many francs down on the counter, and so much space in the paper next day. So, after going my rounds, I came back very dissatisfied. My Chief asked me what I had been doing. 'Throwing away the money of Russia,' I replied, 'and all to no purpose.' 'Why?' he asked. 'Because,' I replied, 'the article you sent me to get published was written in such terms of eulogy that not even a Government of Archangels could possibly have deserved a higher compliment. The stupidest person who reads it discovers at a glance that it is simply a réclame dictated and paid for at so much a line. It is a sheer waste of Russia's money.' Ever since

then I have never forgotten that if you want to make a salad you should never omit the vinegar."

Unfortunately, this sensible way of looking at things seldom commends itself to Censors, and so Madame Novikoff's book was put under the ban, and remained so during two years.

When Count Nicolas Ignatieff was Minister of Interior he called on Madame Novikoff in Moscow. She mentioned to him the absurd blunder of the Censor connected with her *Russia and England*. The Count was disgusted with the stupidity of his subordinate, and at once telegraphed to St. Petersburg his permission for the free sale of the book. But political works are generally shortlived :—

"Elles vivent ce que vivent les roses
L'y' espace d'un matin,"

and they cannot be revived after two years' banishment.

Her defence of Autocracy met with enthusiastic approval in some unexpected quarters. For instance, M. de Laveleye, who had somewhat scandalised her by his admiration for the Nihilists, was equally full of admiration for her plea for the Autocracy. The two letters read somewhat curiously in juxtaposition, written as they are by the same pen :—

"*December* 12, 1879.

"Your defence of Autocracy is wonderfully eloquent. Furthermore, from the point of view usually taken, it is perfectly well founded. It is her Emperors who have made Russia a reality and have westernised her.

"On the other hand, parliamentary rule would hardly suit Russia, and, in fact, it shows altogether unhappy results on the Continent.

"But what I regret about Russia is that she has

not remained truly Slavic—that is to say, equalistic and democratic like Servia and Bulgaria, etc.

"The miseries suffered by the peoples are caused by the external rôles their sovereigns cause them to play, whence there arise war, debts, taxes—all miseries of our West. That is what the Slavs are to be saddled with, to their sorrow.

"My ideal is not England, but Switzerland. What I should like would be a federation, from the Peninsula to the Balkans, of agricultural states.

"But all this would lead me too far.

"Your article is excellent. It contains all I should wish to say."

"LIÈGE, *January* 21, 1885.

"You know that I have a great admiration for your Nihilists: their enthusiasm and their fanaticism are proofs of the admirable qualities native to your race, which our civilisation spoils, corrupts, or withers!

"Where else does one find such an absolute sacrifice of life to an abstract idea of justice, and, what is still more marvellous, the secret kept, so that it is not revealed either by traitors or by the chattering of confederates?

"It is rather probable that if I lived in Russia I should be a Nihilist also, like Krapotkine, or at least deported as such.—Yours ever."

Madame Novikoff emphatically did not share M. de Laveleye's admiration of Nihilists. Philosophical observers at a distance like M. de Laveleye might indulge in platonic admiration for the advanced school, but their bombs and their assassinations were too near home for her to regard them as other than enemies of the human race.

Madame Novikoff's enthusiasm for Autocracy was strictly confined to Russia. It was far otherwise with Mr. Froude. He was eager to make Autocracy universal. The mere thought of the introduction of Constitutionalism into Russia filled him with horror. He was for ever imploring her to resist as the seed of all evil the introduction of anything approaching to representative Governments into Russia. He never lost an opportunity of pointing the moral and enforcing it by what occurred in England. For instance, when the General Election of 1880 installed Mr. Gladstone in office, he wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

" *April* 25, 1880.

" You can hardly conceive the strangeness of the revolution in people's minds. The newspapers who were trying in the winter to howl Mr. Gladstone down are now persuaded that he is the first statesman in the world. The mob who broke his windows wanted to give him an ovation when he came to London, and thronged Harley Street daily for a sight of his blessed countenance. And such a people as this is to be charged with the Government of England ! Their ' most sweet voices ' are considered competent, under our glorious constitution, to determine the policy of a great country ! Of course I am personally delighted that Beaconsfield is no longer in a position to set Europe in a blaze. But who can put confidence in a vulgar bellowing mob who cry Pompey one day and Cæsar the next ? "

Here is a very characteristic extract from his letter written in the inclement June of 1880 :—

" We have no summer as yet, and are still shivering over our fires. Last year and the year before the

bad season was set down to God's anger with Lord Beaconsfield. If God is angry with Gladstone too, what is to become of us?—since our only choice lies between them. The British Constitution so orders it. If there was any justice in the management of things, we few unbelievers who do not so especially love the British Constitution ought—like the Israelites in Egypt—to have the sunshine upon and to have warmth and light in our dwellings. I grow to see, in shame and in spite of myself, that the future of the English race lies in America, and not here. We have passed our Zenith and now are hastening to our setting."

The Empress of Russia died on June 3, 1880. Mr. Froude wrote seven days later:—

"Your poor Empress—rather your poor Tsar! The fates have dealt sternly with him in these years; still, I hope and trust that he will not resign, and give the cowardly English world a chance of moralising about him. Let him hold himself erect like a Tower, and show us that there is a man left in Europe who wears a crown that we can respect and admire. You observed that Her Majesty was graciously pleased to allow the Court to go into mourning for a fortnight!"

On January 7, 1881, he again wrote:—

"I foretell a Session of fatuity and helplessness. The Irish may perhaps rebel. I do not think they will; but if they do, the scene will be more lively. My poor friends the Dutch in South Africa are to be shot down. They have made a second Ireland of the Cape, and I look upon it as virtually lost to us. The British Empire is driving to the Devil straight before the wind. Whether Parliamentary Govern-

ment will come to an end in time for us to save the wreck of it, the next few years will show. You have your own troubles and dangers in Russia. Don't add to them. Don't make them insuperable by setting up a Constitution. It is another name for imbecility. One party is as helpless for any good as the other. If the ballot-box gives the game to the Tories, it throws ace deuce; if to the Liberals, it throws deuce ace. In either case the worst possible cast upon the dice. Go not in the way of Constitutions. Abhor them. Fly from them. Pass them by. Be happy that you have Loris Melikoffs and make the most of them."

"Your Loris Melikoffs" did not succeed in saving the life of the Tsar, but that only incited Mr. Froude to greater zeal for absolutism. Alexander II. was murdered in the streets of St. Petersburg. Mr. Froude wrote:—

"*March* 23, 1881.

"Pray write to me about this horrid business in St. Petersburg. I am growing to hate all this Liberalism and Progress and march of intellect. The *Freiheit Aposteln* are as little to my taste as they were to Goethe's, and I shall be well pleased if your new Tsar shuts up the Universities, puts the press into harness, and leads the Russian people to understand that their salvation does not lie in new ideas, but in old-fashioned honest work."

"*February* 20, 1881.

"When Parliaments rule, not the *fittest* men are put at the head of the departments, but the most unfit. I do not know what your friend M. Aksakoff thinks about it all. But let him attend to the practical working of English institutions as they exist at this

moment, and take warning if he still inclines to an imitation of them."

Again, on May 31 :—

"For myself, in spite of Stock Exchanges and leading articles, I still believe in Russia. Your people are loyal and have a sort of belief in God still surviving amongst them—and you have not as yet Parliamentary Government. Therefore I think you will come through, but I know far too little about you. Also, I believe in the American and the German. Between you three the fate of the future world will be decided."

On December 21 he wrote again in the same strain :—

"I sometimes wonder why the Emperor does not remove the Court to Moscow, the real centre of Russia. There was a rumour the other day of another assassination plot. If the Emperor is a soldier, the place for him is at the head of his army, like Nicholas ; but I *believe* in Russia. I believe Russia will be great and standing erect when we are creatures of the past, burst up from within by Parliamentary wind. But it is a *belief* only. I know about our condition ; I do not know about yours."

What added to Froude's disgust was his conviction that the enemies who sowed the seeds of liberty in Russian soil were Englishmen. He tells Madame Novikoff :—

"But your dear country is rising out of its difficulties. My own conviction is that you were suffering most from the translations of Herbert Spencer, John Mill, and Lecky, which your innocent, simple people

believed in as gospel, and got poisoned. They are three *feeble* heretics, but they are too much for such enthusiastic heads."

But even Froude had sometimes an uneasy suspicion that all might not be quite right even under Absolute Government. He wrote to Madame Novikoff on November 27, 1882:—

"What is the meaning of the perpetual deficits in your budgets? If you cannot keep your finances in order, the demand will come for a Constitution, or else you will go to wreck. Nothing can stop it. It was this which brought on the French Revolution. No Government can stand which runs a country into debt in peace time."

The popular effervescence that followed General Skobeleff's menacing speeches filled Froude with alarm. He wrote to Madame Novikoff, March 11, 1882:—

"My dear Friend,—I must write a few additional words. I am astonished at the wild attitude of your Slav friends. Your Government I hope and trust will be wiser than they. If not, I shall have to conclude that a Sovereign with the enthusiastic confidence of his subjects can rule no better than a Parliament, and lies equally at the mercy of gusts of popular passion. . . . Russia may retain her great place in Europe, and may be strong and even supreme, but on condition only that she retains her calmness and dignity. Explosive sparks of oratorical soldiers are no more respectable a method of making known the sentiments of a great nation than the 'howling' (as your friend justly calls it) of English newspapers. I have believed in you Russians because I believed

you were superior to all that. Am I to conclude that you too are falling into disintegration, like the rest of Europe, and are drifting helpless before the passing waves of sentiment? . . . Your business is to show the world an example of a well-ordered and steady administration. You will bring your principles to shame.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, if I speak strongly. There are thousands of reasonable, educated men who think as I do; and the deliberate judgment of disinterested onlookers who wish you well is not to be despised."

There was never any vindictiveness about Madame Novikoff's feelings towards the madmen of revolutionary Russia. Her attitude was rather that of Him who in Holy Writ cries: "Turn ye, turn ye: why will ye die?" And when a Nihilist repented, she was quick to demand his reinstatement with all honour among the company of loyal citizens. But he must first repent and then bring forth works meet for repentance.

This readiness to receive the returning prodigal, due to the instincts of a heart full of kindly sympathy and tender compassion, did nothing to destroy, if indeed it did not do something to strengthen, the barrier which divided her from the little group of exiles who made their home in London. As the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, so the Krapotkines and the Stepniaks held no communion with one whom they regarded as the zealous unofficial emissary of the Government which they longed to destroy. They were as incapable of doing justice to her selfless spirit of patriotism as she was incapable of recognising that they were endeavouring to serve their country.

In 1889 Madame Novikoff exerted herself with characteristic energy on behalf of a penitent Nihilist, M. Leon Tikhomiroff by name. Tikhomiroff had joined the Nihilists when a mere boy, and for his share in their propaganda while still a student in a Russian University he was arrested and imprisoned for four years. Prison, with him as with others, intensified the vehemence of his convictions. When he was released he left Russia and flung himself passionately into the revolutionary movement, under the influence of Sophie Peroffsky, the assassin who had promised to marry him. Fortunately for M. Tikhomiroff, Sophie Peroffsky fell in love with another assassin—Chibaltchich—and M. Tikhomiroff's romance came to an untimely end. He was never a Terrorist, but his book, *La Russie Politique et Sociale,* was for some years held in high honour by the Nihilists. Years, however, brought wisdom. In 1888 M. Tikhomiroff published a solemn recantation of his Nihilistic heresies. His brochure, *Why I have ceased to be a Revolutionist,* began with a frank confession: "I look upon my past with disgust." M. Tikhomiroff's apostasy was regarded as a great misfortune by his old comrades. But when M. Tikhomiroff wished to return to Russia he found that his way was barred.

Madame Novikoff was very much struck by the sincerity of that recantation. She had no doubt about it, and did her best for him. She often wrote to him and about him. Her article "The Confession of a Nihilist" produced a sensation at St. Petersburg. The Count Dmitry Tolstoy, then Minister of the Interior, was also struck by the report, addressed to him directly by Tikhomiroff, and allowed the latter to return to Russia. Tikhomiroff became a contributor to the *Moscow Gazette,* where he worked with great

success many years. After Gringmouth's death he went to St. Petersburg, where he got an appointment at the Home Office, and now he has been appointed himself Editor of the *Moscow Gazette*—a very important post. His children have all been brought up in strict Orthodox views, so much so that his eldest son—Madame Novikoff's godchild—is now a monk, after having studied with great success at the Theological Academy. This case strengthens one of Madame Novikoff's cherished dreams: an establishment of secret Government agents whose duty it would be to find out the sincere, repentant, misguided revolutionists, who could return to their native country and become useful and trustworthy patriots. Madame Novikoff is deeply convinced that the world would be startled to learn the large numbers of people who deeply regret their past and would be happy to return to the path of duty!

Some zealous enemy of the Russian Government began in the autumn of 1893 to send Madame Novikoff copies of a publication called *Free Russia*, which declared itself to be the organ of the English Society of Russian Freedom. Its President, Mr. R. Spence Watson, defined its aim as an effort "to destroy the Russian Government," which was discredited with all the ingenuity of which the Nihilistic party was capable.

As a piece of journalistic dynamite it might be compared with the *Irish World* of Patrick Ford.

Madame Novikoff having perceived the drift of *Free Russia*, usually threw it away unread. But one day she chanced to glance over the title-page, on which were printed the names of the General Committee of the Friends of Russian Freedom. There she saw, to her amazement and disgust, the names of two members of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry: the Right Hon. Arthur

Acland, M.P., and the Right Hon. J. G. Shaw Lefevre, M.P., now Lord Eversleigh, and the name of Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P. She at once sat down and wrote a remonstrance to Mr. Gladstone.

It so happened that Lady Spencer held a reception that very day, which was attended by Madame Novikoff and Mr. Gladstone. As soon as she met the Prime Minister Madame Novikoff, with her usual impetuosity, burst out with a vehement remonstrance: "What a shame it is that two of your ministers are directors of the publication called *Free Russia*, which is an organ of the Nihilists and all the bitterest enemies of Russia."

Mr. Gladstone replied at once with emphasis: "That is impossible, quite impossible! Prove it. I cannot believe it otherwise."

"Very well," said Madame Novikoff; "you shall see the proofs of what I say."

Next day she looked for the copy of *Free Russia* with the names of the ministers. It had apparently been thrown into the waste-paper basket and destroyed. What was to be done?

It was a miserably foggy day. Madame Novikoff did not know where to find a copy of *Free Russia*. Nothing daunted, she went into the City, and after no end of hunting about among newsagents she procured the number of December 1, 1893, and the following numbers all bearing the same title-page.

Returning home, she sat down in triumph to write to Mr. Gladstone:—

"*December* 5, 1893.

"My dear Mr. Gladstone,—From what you told me last night at the Spencers' I gather that I forgot to enclose the list of the members whose names, undoubtedly, carry a great weight and are sure to

increase the importance of the Nihilistic paper called *Free Russia*. The two principal founders of that paper are 'Volhofsky' and 'Stepniak.' The latter, whose real name is perfectly well known in Russia, is Kraftschinsky. It strikes me that the three gentlemen of your administration may be quite unaware that their honourable names have appeared in such bad company. Best love to Mrs. Gladstone.

"OLGA NOVIKOFF."

Mr. Gladstone replied as follows :—

"*December* 6, 1893.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I have communicated with Mr. Lefevre, and I send you an extract of a note which I have received from him. It is right to say that the gentleman who, as I understood, is the head of this little-known Society, is a man of the highest character, and one quite incapable in my opinion of connecting himself with the ideas and plans of Nihilism. If, however, there is any evidence which connects the Society with those ideas, I will prosecute my inquiries further.—Believe me sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

Extract.

"I did at one time subscribe to a Society called the 'Friends of Russian Freedom,' but I never was a member of its Committee or had anything to do with its affairs. From the papers sent to me I had no reason whatever to believe that it was imbued with 'Nihilistic doctrines.' G. SHAW LEFEVRE."

Madame Novikoff appears to have replied by sending the title-page with the names published in large letters.

Mr. Gladstone replied :—

"*December* 8, 1893.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I have handed on the *Free Russia* question.

"However, I have to thank you for the information you gave me. It appears to me that a Minister in our country has no title to belong to a political Society in another. Let him look to his own affairs—here at any rate these give us enough, and more than enough, to do.

"I find both my colleagues, Mr. Lefevre and Mr. Acland, agree with me in this opinion. They have withdrawn their names from the Society, and assure me they had forgotten they belonged to it, which I can well believe, considering the countless multitude of private associations in this blessed country.

"I do not think of hunting out Mr. Burt unless you wish it, for he is not a minister, and he is so good, so excellent a man, that I do not like to trouble him. —Yours sincerely, W. E. Gladstone."

So ended an incident which will be regarded in very different lights according to the standpoints of different readers. That Madame Novikoff's action was justified, Mr. Gladstone was the first to admit. Ministers of the Crown have many privileges, but they also have their limitations, and at a time when they are entrusted with the conduct of the affairs of the Empire they clearly cannot be free to become members of the General Committee of an organisation whose avowed object is the destruction of the Government of a friendly and allied Empire in co-operation with which they are carrying on the international policy of that World State the first rudiments of which are

discernible in the European Concert, the International Court of Arbitration, and the Hague Conference.[1]

Madame Novikoff seldom expressed any opinion upon internal Russian affairs. Almost the only letter of hers that I can find that touches on this subject contained the following cry of satisfaction on the publication of the circular of General Ignatieff when he took office under Alexander III. :—

"Moscow, *May* 19/7, 1881.

"The great event of the day is Gen. Ignatieff's appointment and his circular. I suppose the *Telegraph* has already given a detailed account of it to the foreign press. Now, more than ever, what we want is a national policy for our home affairs—viz. the absolute union between the monarch and his people. It is of vital urgency. God deliver us from every semblance of parties—Conservative, Liberal, or any other. We all must constitute *one undivided party*—the *National one*. Let us be liberal in our Conservatism, and conservative in our Liberalism. Instead

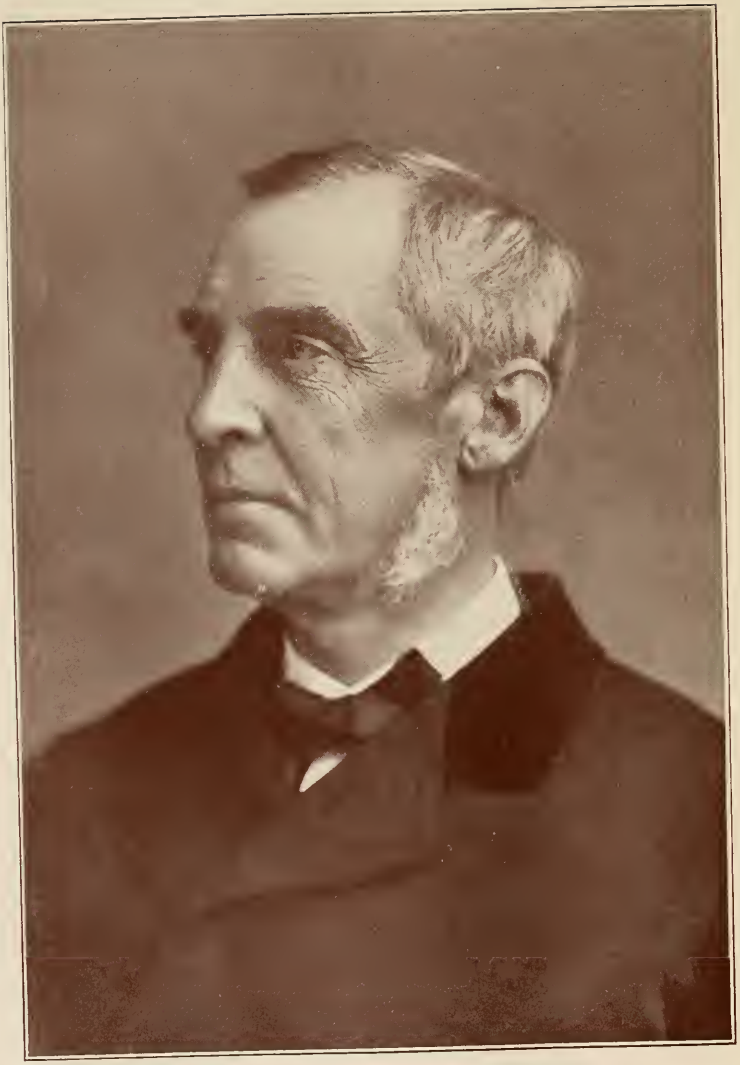
[1] Madame Novikoff was surprised and grieved to see the name of Mr. Shaw Lefevre on the list of members of the Committee. She had known his father, who was a real friend of Russia. Writing in 1879, before *Russia and England* went to press, she said :—

"*December* 22, 1878 (?).

"I should so much like to pay a tribute to the dear Sir John Shaw Lefevre's memory. He was so charming a man, and such a Russian! I could perhaps express my regret that so few people in England could be compared to such a wonderful and kind-hearted man as Sir John. When I saw him last year I found him reading in the original a new scientific book which had appeared so recently in Russia that I had not even had time to see it in my own country. The knowledge he exhibited of Russia, his keen understanding of our internal position, were indeed striking and very pleasant to me. As a rule there is only one thing known here about Russians : that we sometimes take tea with lemon. But surely that is not sufficient for having a complete idea of a country."

of being ashamed of what in reality constitutes our glory, let us faithfully cling to Russian particularities—'oddities,' if you like—and only develop reforms, the germ of which lies in our history, our traditions, and our character. Christian ethics having been accepted by Russia, let it also be the foundation of our home policy!"

To the last sentiment let all the people say Amen!



Photograph by Elliott & Fry.]

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Froude.

MR. FROUDE'S letters to Madame Novikoff make a large budget. They cover all sorts of subjects, lightly and brilliantly treated, and they might have been published in full without the slightest fear that they would take from his fame or wound the feelings of his most intimate friend. But Mr. Froude always objected to the publication of his letters, written as they were, *currente calamo,* with no intention or thought that they would meet the eyes of any one but the person to whom they were addressed, and his family do not feel at liberty to disregard his expressed wishes. Within certain clearly defined limits, however, I have been allowed to use the letters as material from which to make extracts for the purpose of completing the historical picture which Madame Novikoff's correspondence portrays so vividly, and the more important letters and extracts have already been embodied in these volumes.

The interest of a large number of the remaining letters is personal, and independent of relation to historical events. There is also a certain sameness in many of them. There were one or two subjects on which Froude seemed never tired of descanting. His letters abound in references to what he considered the imposture of Constitutional Government and prophecies of its ultimate overthrow in this country.

On this topic Madame Novikoff was never weary of hearing him. Naturally she was less in sympathy with his distrust of Mr. Gladstone and with the denunciations which came thick and fast over his attempt to adjust the Irish question.

Froude acted as literary sponsor to Madame Novikoff in her book *Is Russia Wrong?* and again in her work *Russia and England*, and his name was no doubt useful in helping to get them a respectful hearing. He was one of the most brilliant writers of the English language in the Victorian Era; and although, as befitted a follower of Carlyle, he was detached from party, he was on terms of intimate friendship with prominent statesmen such as Lord Carnarvon and Lord Derby, and on friendly terms, at least, with Lord Salisbury and Lord Lytton. He was in the great world and knew what was going on, and had all the material for the most interesting kind of gossip. His letters to Madame Novikoff were of so rich, varied, and brilliant a kind, that even she, who had many distinguished correspondents, might well be proud of them. No one at any period wrote to her more constantly, and there was no one whose friendship she valued more highly than his, nor any one among the famous men who wrote to her so frequently whose letters were more welcome, notwithstanding the fact that there was in Froude a certain cynical humour and wilful exaggeration which made him delight in inveighing with particular vehemence against her political friends.

For the reasons already stated, I have been compelled to summarise, in a few short paragraphs, most of the purely personal letters, and the scanty literature of letter-writing will be the poorer in consequence. A considerable number, however, refer to

a subject over which such a furious discussion raged in the eighties of the last century that it is already public property. Froude's action as the literary executor of Thomas Carlyle and the writer of his biography may, I hope, be referred to to-day without any risk of reviving the flames of controversy. Mr. Herbert Paul, in his *Life of Froude*, published three or four years ago, practically demolished the absurd suggestion, started and maintained by rabid Carlyleans, that Froude, so far from being a true friend of Carlyle, was really jealous of his literary reputation, and had sought to damage him—first, by publishing the *Reminiscences* without proper editing; and second, by drawing an unfair portrait of him in the *Life*. If anything further were needed to disprove a charge which only the meaner souls, or people utterly ignorant of the relation between Carlyle and Froude, could ever have believed, it is supplied by Froude's references to the subject in his letters to Madame Novikoff. From these it is evident that, so far from underrating Carlyle, his intense admiration of and belief in his genius rose to a pitch of hero-worship to which modern readers of his book can hardly attain.

Because the references have in this way a literary-historical value, I am permitted to use them. It must be borne in mind that Madame Novikoff was a friend of Carlyle and a friend of Froude.

The first reference to the subject is dated April 11, 1880, the year before Carlyle died. Froude says :—

"I am writing quietly at Carlyle's *Life*, and I hope I may live to complete it. He and Byron will alone be remembered five centuries hence of all our modern men of *Genius !!!*—Wonderful genius! These two

have been real men; the rest will be found to be but the notes of broken Banks, worth as much as the paper on which the promise to pay is written. But against the promise will be written 'No effects.'"

Four days later he wrote :—

"For myself, I am busy with Carlyle's *Life*, with which he is impatient to know that I am making progress. He himself grows weaker and weaker. But he has still a great reserve of strength, and may last for longer than he wishes. As soon as he is gone I mean (if I survive him) to leave this foolish idiotic London and take a house among the Scotch mountains, where at least I shall hear no more nonsense."

In January in the following year, when Mr. Carlyle was very near to his end, Froude wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

"I have had an interesting letter about *Cæsar* from Paris, from a Comte de Vitzthum. Do you know him? He wants me to do Augustus. But it cannot be. Carlyle's *Life* must be my next, most likely my last work in this world."

Carlyle died in February 1881.

The following month his much-discussed *Reminiscences* were given to the world. They had been prepared for publication at his own desire during his lifetime, but they were received, it will be remembered, with a storm of abuse on account of their outspoken criticisms on men whose relatives were still alive.

On September 30, referring to the subject, Froude said :—

"Carlyle's women friends expected me to paint for them the foolish idol which their own foolish

minds had made of him, and are furious at me because I could not and would not gratify them. The *Reminiscences* will be like Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. All the world howled for a year or two at poor Boswell, and then found that he had given them the best Biography in the English language."

Some time in the summer or autumn of 1882 the proposal was made to erect a statue to Carlyle. At the meeting of fashionable admirers called in October to discuss the project, Froude was not present. Professor Tyndall took a leading part on the occasion. On October 26, Froude wrote to Madame Novikoff :—

"I did not hear Tyndall's address, but it did very well for the audience. A time will come when the English nation will come to know what Carlyle was, and of their own selves will raise a statue to him. Then, if I am alive, I shall take some interest in it. Now I have not in the least. Not one of all the party yesterday believed in Carlyle's teaching. They would every one have disclaimed it. Tyndall can afford to be polite to Carlyle's God, because he thinks that such a God will never get in his way."

On March 26, 1883, he wrote :—

"Mrs. Carlyle's *Letters and Memorial* will appear on the 1st of April, an ominous day!! I can form no guess as to how they will be received. It depends on the note struck in the first review in the newspapers. As the leading hound barks, the rest of the pack will howl in chorus. You, I think, may calculate on a favourable reception, especially as you will be free this time from any connection with so unpopular a person as,—Your humble servant."

On April 13 he wrote again :—

"I am the worst of correspondents, but you will understand me and pardon me when I tell you that I have been bringing out Mrs. Carlyle's *Memoirs*. There has been the same excitement as there was two years ago, and the same outcry against my unfortunate self. People will not look at Carlyle's will and see that this special task was bequeathed to me. They will not see that Carlyle's collection of these letters as an act of atonement for offences which were half imaginary was the noblest action of his own noble life. Hereafter it will be seen in its true light, and he will be honoured and loved for it. As to me, I am under the blackest of clouds, and shall probably be left there. I do not send you the book, because you are coming back to us, and then you shall have it."

Before settling down to the last volumes of the Carlyle series (Thomas Carlyle's *Life in London*, published in 1884), Froude wrote an article for the *Quarterly Review* on St. Teresa, which pleased him as much as it displeased the Catholics. He told Madame Novikoff on July 29 :—

"This will end for the present all such undertakings for me, as I must set myself with all my strength to drawing Carlyle's real portrait as I knew him. The world, fool that it is, will then discern that in what I have already published I was not wanting in love and admiration for him, whatever else they may think about it."

When he had settled down to his task, Froude wrote on November 21, 1883 :—

"My poor St. Teresa, in the *Quarterly Review*, is rather liked, I believe. I like it very much. And

I like her, and if I have a chance in the other world I shall try to make her acquaintance. I get on with Carlyle ; a sort of Rembrandt portrait will come out at last, not unlike ; and if I can make others feel as I do, *intensely lovable*. *She* was very hard upon him. He himself could see no fault in her, and meekly arranged her letters for publication as an act of penance. It will be understood by and by."

He did not refer to the subject again until February 22, 1884 :—

"I am working very hard—finishing Carlyle. The world will at least see what I thought and think of him,—that all their Philosophers, Poets, Orators, Men of Science, etc., now living (if you distilled their collected intellects), would not yield as much as his,—in fact, that he is the only one of them that will be remembered a hundred years hence—and was as good as he was great. This done, I shall burn all my pens and paper, and bother myself with Literature no more for ever."

On March 9 he writes again :—

"I am leading the quietest of lives, finishing Carlyle. I do not suppose that I shall please people, for they would quarrel with me whatever I did. But I shall show, at any rate, my own feeling towards him as at once the most brilliant and truest and most tender-hearted man that ever lived. I shall also say that he is the only Englishman of our generation that has the slightest chance of being remembered with interest a hundred years hence. If I extend the generation to the century, I might say Byron and Carlyle will be remembered,—and who else ? Meanwhile I go out nowhere ; answer all invitations with

an 'I can't'; and spend my time when I am not writing with May, who is very good company."

At last the *Life* was ready. Writing on September 1, 1884, he says :—

"Stephen thinks well of it, and predicts a good reception. Anyway, there Carlyle will stand, visible, exactly as he was, to all mankind. In the end the world will feel towards him as we who knew him felt, and will love him all the more for his peculiarities. England will not again see his equal. He will stand alone in literature, as he stood alone in his life. *Athanasius contra mundum.* Athanasius has had the making of the belief of mankind for fifteen centuries. Carlyle may have the remaking of it for as many more."

One more letter, written at an earlier stage of the controversy, may be given here :—

"I am living under conditions which try friendship, and yours has proved itself real. Those whom I trusted have fallen from me. Those of whom I know nothing have come forward to help me; and what is it all about? Mine is the true confidence in Carlyle. I look on him as one of those great men who will be lights in the world a hundred years hence: one who must be known as he was. Known in all particulars. And there has been no great man of letters whose history, as a whole, will stand a sterner scrutiny. Goethe's *Autobiography* was a shock to foolish idolaters, yet who would part with it? In wise men's eyes it detracts nothing from Goethe. Yet Goethe tells things of himself a thousand times worse than the worst which can be known of Carlyle. Had I been a friend of Rousseau, and if he had trusted

me with the *Confessions*, so strong is my belief that a man who has powerfully influenced his age should be shown in his true personality, that I believe I should have published it : though I positively *loathe* the aspect of Rousseau which his *Confessions* reveal.

"I don't know what will come of it all. The whole question is now in lawyers' hands. If the law will relieve me of my trust I shall make no objection. If it confirms Carlyle's disposition, I shall go through with what I have undertaken, and however things go I shall be eternally obliged to the few who have not turned their backs on me."

No friend could have been more kind and sympathetic in time of trouble than Froude himself, and these extracts from his correspondence with Madame Novikoff may fittingly conclude with a beautiful letter, written to her when her only son lay, as was supposed, hopelessly ill. Unlike the other letters used, this one is of a purely private nature, but I allow myself to give it in full, because of its beauty and because it completes the sketch of Froude as Madame Novikoff knew him in his capacity of friend :—

"*January* 11, 1883.

"My dear Friend,—I am very sorry to read such sad news as you send me. The realities of life when they are cruelly brought home to us make our ordinary interests as ashes in our mouths. Those are probably the happiest who are compelled to spend their whole time in daily labours, who have no leisure to 'greet,' and whose fibre is so strung by necessity that they accept whatever Fate sends them with stoical resignation. *Werde ruhig*, says Jean Paul, be a stoic if nothing else will serve. Every day I feel

more and more the rushing away of life ; the rushing away, or at least the eclipse, of the beliefs and convictions which give to life any worthiness and dignity, yet we must hold on to what hope remains. I am still convinced, though I find it hard to give a reason for it, that there is some purpose at the bottom of this existence of ours, though I have no expectation that for myself I shall ever know any more about it than I know now.

" What comfort can talk of this kind be to you, threatened as you are with an irreparable loss ? None, and less than none. Yet I cannot write lies. My most sad conviction is that there is nothing for us but to bear such lot as falls on us ; yet not so to bear it as to grow hard and indifferent, but accept the pain, as well as the blow which brings it, as part of our condition.

" For you, however, there is one practical resource : you can devote yourself to your country ; you can work, and you can work with effect.

" I saw Kinglake the other night. He said that you had written to him, but he was very sad and sorrowful.—Yours ever heartily,

" J. A. Froude."

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF, 1887.

CHAPTER XV.

Russia from Within.

MADAME NOVIKOFF, as champion of the Slavs of the Balkans, was accepted by English Liberals as the representative of unofficial Russia. She pleaded for Liberty, Nationality, Religion, and the Rights of Man. But when the struggle in the Balkans was brought to a close, and the revolutionary centre was transferred from Philippopolis to St. Petersburg, Madame Novikoff undertook without hesitation the much more difficult and exceedingly thankless task of defending the official Russia against the propaganda of Nihilists, Jews, and revolutionaries, which has been kept up diligently in Europe and in London ever since the days of Herzen.

The assassination of the Emperor Emancipator began an era of stern repression in Russia, which lasted without a break until the death of Alexander III. During the whole of that reign Madame Novikoff maintained almost single-handed, with indomitable courage and unabated enthusiasm, the defence of the Russian Government before an exceedingly hostile public. The persecution of the Jews, as we have seen, found in her, if not a champion, at least an exponent and vindicator of the measures taken by the Russian Government to repress the violence of the Jewish Revolutionists.

When repression was answered by assassination,

Madame Novikoff, like many other Russians, rallied to the side of the Government, and made the best of a case for everything it did. The favourite weapons for assaulting Russia in the English press were exaggerations of the horrors of Siberia and of the atrocities of the Russian prison system. It was in order to blunt the edge of both these weapons that Madame Novikoff consented to write a preface to Harry de Windt's book on Siberian prisons.

This preface is so characteristic, and it displays, moreover, so clearly both Madame Novikoff's point of view and her controversial method, at once personal and provocative, that I reprint it here in full :—

"Mr. Harry de Windt has undoubtedly shown courage in asking me to write a few words of preface to his book on Russian prisons.

"Me—of all the world! Anybody who has ever heard of me knows that I am a thorough Russian, a staunch believer in Greek Orthodoxy, in Autocracy and Nationalism; convinced of the grand future of Russia as of my own existence, and a prison Directress to boot!—In fact, never paying the homage of hypocrisy in disguising my real self, I represent all that the English people have the greatest dislike to.

"I hesitated to comply with Mr. de Windt's request, because I felt that my sympathies with his honest and energetic investigations might injure his book rather than commend it to English readers.

"Another very important consideration occurred to me. To form a proper opinion of the Russian prisons, it is necessary to possess, what English people certainly do not possess, some knowledge of the ordinary conditions of life in our country. A preface to any book on Russia ought, in fact, to be somewhat

of an introduction into the penetralia of our innermost existence. But in giving real facts about our country, I have the feeling of printing advertisements about ourselves—to us Russians a very antipathetic work indeed.

"Russia is, over a great extent, a land of stoicism, fortified by Christianity—not a bad basis for the formation of character, after all—but it is a hard school. Our country life is an important study. It is full of self-denial, of hardships, of privations. Indeed, in some parts peasant life is so hard that we, the upper classes, could scarcely endure it.

"Landed proprietors are generally in close intercourse with their ex-serfs. The latter, though perfectly free and themselves landowners, from the fact that their former masters have at heart their welfare, naïvely think that the former are still under obligation to furnish help when needed. This irrational relationship is generally accepted good-naturedly by the ex-masters, though very often it involves great material sacrifices. We could all give our personal experiences of village life, and I, for one, venture to do so, though there are many others better qualified.

"To visit the sick and the poor is a common duty recognised by all in our country, although the discharge of this duty sometimes is rather an ordeal. How overcrowded and dark are their dwellings! And, to my shame be it confessed, I could hardly swallow their daily food. (The only approach to the condition that I know of in the United Kingdom is in the poverty-stricken districts of Ireland.) Yet those who lead that rough life seem strong and happy, on the whole. They would make merry jokes, and after a long day's heavy work, from sunrise to sunset, return home from the fields singing and dancing.

"Injudicious and indiscriminate charity would do harm here as elsewhere. In illustration of this I will mention the following from my own experience.

"My son, a newly appointed Zemski Natchalnik (Zemstvo Chief), has recently founded two schools on our Tamboff estate—as has been done by other landed proprietors in the same province, such as Mr. E. Narishkine, Mr. Garainoff, etc.

"The principal local representatives of the Church, and the Chiefs of our local School Board, were invited to discuss the programme of the teaching and management of these schools—one for boarders (future Primary School Teachers), the other a daily school for our parish children. (All our schools for the people are, and have always been, free of charge.)

"The educational scheme met with almost unanimous approval, but when the boarding arrangement came to be discussed, with suggestions about 'light mattresses and pillows,' they were met by a general outburst of disapproval.

"'Here you are wrong. Why should you spoil them, and make them unfit for their usual life, by accustoming them to unnecessary luxuries? The utmost you should provide, as a comfort for peasant boys, is some straw and a plain bench to sleep on. Nothing more.'

"It may perhaps interest my readers to know that there is such a thirst for learning amongst our peasant children, that candidates come in overwhelming numbers, and this happens to all our educational institutions—they are overcrowded to the last degree. The population increases more quickly than church and school accommodation for it. That inconvenience is also noticeable in our prisons. But to people accustomed to a very hard life, would it be a punish-

ment if, instead of suffering discomfort for their crimes, they were surrounded with what to them would appear extreme luxury? Where is one to draw the line between necessaries and luxuries? A prison ought to be a punishment, not a reward, for crimes.

"In visiting the prisons, I have heard the remark that some of the convicts would not have committed their misdeeds had they possessed at home half of the comfort provided in the prison. They also know that whilst they are away good care is taken of their children. I remember a female prisoner, who had to suffer a year's punishment for theft and smuggling, whose looks of distress and misery forcibly struck me. Knowing that she was near the end of her term, I asked how it was that she did not look happier. 'I am pining for my boy. I feel sure he is dead. I wrote to him twice, but he never replied,' answered she, sobbing. 'He was taken up as a beggar and a vagabond by the Beggars' Committee.'

"'Well,' said I, 'since you can tell me where he may be found, I will go and see him at once, and you shall know the exact truth about him. Wait patiently till I come back.'

"Off I went to the 'Beggars' Institution,' which is at a distance from the prison, and had the boy brought to me. He looked clean and healthy.

"'Your mother sends you her blessing,' I began. 'She is in good health, but grieves that you never answered her letters. Have they not reached you?'

"'Oh yes, they have; but I cannot write. I began learning here, and can only write O's and pot-hooks.'

"As I always provide myself with writing materials on visiting the prisons, and am always ready in deserving cases to write letters dictated to me by illiterate prisoners, I offered my services to the little beggar.

"He seemed radiant. 'Yes, tell her I am very well fed here—three times every day. Food plentiful.'

"'What else?' asked I. 'Would you not like to see your mother? Don't you go to church every Sunday, and don't you pray for her?'

"'Oh yes. Tell her to come to live with me here.'

"You should have seen the joy of the mother when I brought her this very undiplomatic dispatch, and the interest created amongst her fellow-prisoners!

"To help the wretched is a pleasure thoroughly appreciated by Russians. It is absurd to preach to us charity and compassion. We are brought up in those notions from our childhood. Christianity with us is not a vague term; it represents a very clear 'Categorical Principle,' which forms a link between all of us, from the Emperor down to the humblest peasant. Our highest classes are very well represented in that respect. First comes our Empress, who is the soul of charity and compassion. I never heard of any appeal made to her in vain. Nor could anybody, I think, be kinder than the Emperor. His aunt, the Grand Duchess Constantine, notwithstanding the endless demands on her generosity, has just undertaken to feed a thousand of famine-stricken peasants till next harvest. I could also give other examples from amongst the Imperial Family.

"Then, coming to a lower rank, we have, for instance, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, Mr. Pobédonostzeff, and his wife. The latter, though far from strong in health, takes care of two large schools, visiting them almost daily. With the support and sympathy of her husband, she collects large sums of money every year, in order to send to the prisoners of Sakhalin (our worst criminals) quantities of clothes, useful tools, tobacco and toys, writing materials and religious books. Our

lower classes only care for 'Divine literature,' as they call it. Religious books are in great demand in every part of Russia, which helps to defeat Nihilistic teaching and saves the people from that criminal folly.

"Or take the case of Mr. Serge Ratchinsky, a man of good birth and worldly prospects, a distinguished Moscow Professor, who, without any of that self-advertisement which seems to be the necessary stimulus to similar efforts in Western Europe, buried himself in the country, and there founded a school, which has served as a model for ten or twelve other schools in the same province, and which he superintends and guides with fatherly care and in strictly Greek Orthodox views. He also organised a large Temperance movement, which is now spreading throughout Russia.

"I could give numerous instances to show that Philanthropy, far from being unknown, is widely practised in Russia. In fact, it permeates all our work, including the prisons.

"Our great Empress Catherine II. used to say: 'Better pardon ten criminals than punish one innocent.' This became a favourite saying with us, and perhaps accounts for the leniency of our juries, which is often carried too far. For what right have we to endanger the public safety by allowing crime to reign unchecked?

"In England murderers are quietly hanged, and this happens even pretty often. According to us, this is going too far. How are you to manifest Christian compassion and love to sinners when they are so quickly and definitely disposed of?

"What chance have they to repent? Capital punishment is repellent to public feeling in Russia,

and has been used in cases which, thank God, were quite exceptional and extremely rare. With us, only the very worst crimes are punished with imprisonment for life. And even for these, it may at all events be said, 'While there is life there is hope.'

"Very great improvements have been introduced in our prison system. More are to follow. We see our shortcomings better than ignorant, dilettanti critics, whose only object is to excite an artificial indignation.

"These questions are very important and complicated, but, as Thiers used to say, 'Prenez tout au sérieux—Rien au tragique.'

"Those who wish to know the Russian prisons as they are in the year 1891 have now the opportunity of doing so by studying Mr. Harry de Windt's most interesting and trustworthy book. I must add that he has seen more of Russian territory than I have. Unfortunately, I have never visited Siberia; he has been there twice. Our prison authorities, both in Europe and in Asia,—convinced of his sincere desire to write 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,'—opened the prison doors to him whenever asked, by day or by night. I am happy that they have done so. Mr. de Windt deserves confidence not only as an able writer and keen observer, but because, if he will permit me to say so, he shows himself to be a thorough gentleman. By this we understand a man brought up in old, independent family traditions, imbued with the conviction that honour is not a commercial commodity to be trafficked with or exchanged for either notoriety or money.

"The more his interesting work is read, the more convinced do we become that whatever he writes, be it in praise or blame, he thoroughly believes!

An Englishman has his own views and feelings; by all means let him express these freely, so long as his criticism is guided by a genuine respect for truth. In that direction Mr. de Windt's book deserves imitation, and is a wholesome contrast to that literature, so popular in England, which is chiefly based upon imagination and our Police Court Reports. Every country having prisons must be supposed to have criminals, and any collector of horrors can easily fabricate the most dreadful pictures. In Russia, sketches of this kind, purposely misleading the public, would of course be ridiculed; in England, unfortunately, the grosser the exaggeration the better it pays! But not everything should be considered from either a penny-a-liner or a Stock Exchange point of view. Nor, even judged by that standard, is it admissible to obtain money on false pretences. England has nothing to gain by not only ignoring the truth, but by acting under absolute misrepresentations and calumnies. I declare and insist upon this positive fact. Credulous readers of English newspapers —these latter-day Gospels—are misled, shamefully misled, by a great portion of the press. People were angry with me last year when I reminded them of the force represented by Russia. I did say that she is a great military power with an army of two millions, whom no European country dares to attack single-handed. I might have added what is of even more importance —namely, her capacity to transform her humble, everyday life into a heroism which has more than once, in moments of great national trial, astonished the world. Might not a nation of this character be a useful friend and ally?

"How I wish I had the miraculous gift of curing moral blindness. What a grand and edifying spectacle

would be that of the two great Christian civilising Powers, trustful and united, working together not only in Europe, but especially in Asia, where their present policy is only hindering the work of civilisation amongst Alien races !

"Thus any English writer helping towards a true knowledge of Russia as she really is, is doing good service to a great Christian cause.

"Amongst these is Mr. Harry de Windt, and I, as a Russian, can only wish him and his book 'God speed.' If *noblesse oblige, Christianisme oblige plus encore !*"

As a pendant to this chapter, I quote the following extract from one of the last letters of Mr. Froude's, dated April 2, 1892 :—

"I have read de Windt's book with interest. Your own preface is the smartest part of it. De Windt himself is dull, though his facts may be accurate. Tolstoy I have long regarded as a fool more or less. You will observe in most men that when they are dissatisfied with their past lives and repent as they call it, they make guilty the society in which they have lived, instead of blaming themselves. Tolstoy, as I make out, led a loose existence till he grew too old to enjoy it, and then went in for religion and revolution. Thus he is just the kind of man to suit the English taste in its present condition. The papers talk of him as a persecuted Elijah."

MICHAEL KATKOFF.
Editor of the *Moscow Gazette.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Three Russian Editors.

MADAME NOVIKOFF has contributed more or less regularly to the Moscow Press for the last thirty years. She has occasionally written articles for the *Novoe Vremya* of St. Petersburg. The greater number of her articles and letters have been devoted to one end—the interpretation of England to Russia. Sometimes, when she has been angry and disgusted with the frenzied aberrations of British Jingoism, her delineations of England and the English have not been altogether those of a flatterer. But as a rule, and as a whole, Madame Novikoff's letters in the Russian Press have been devoted to the presentation of the better side of England to the Russian public, in the hope that a disposition might be created in favour of the Anglo-Russian entente. Her Russian work was a counterpart to the work she did in England. She was a builder who laboured simultaneously at both sides of the stream which she wished to bridge.

The greatest of her Editors was Mr. Katkoff, the Editor of the *Moscow Gazette*. For nearly a quarter of a century Mr. Katkoff was the recognised chief of the Russian Press. Madame Novikoff has on more than one occasion paid public tribute to her editorial chief.

Writing in 1877, when Mr. Katkoff was still a living force in Russia, she said :—

"The *Moscow Gazette* is the *Times* of Russia in one sense, but not in another. It is the first paper in the Empire, but it leads rather than follows public opinion. The *Times* changes with the times. The *Moscow Gazette* adheres to its own views. The *Times* is impersonal, anonymous. The *Moscow Gazette* is Mr. Katkoff, and Mr. Katkoff is the *Moscow Gazette*. He has his colleagues, but his individuality permeates the paper.

"Few men have influenced more deeply the course of events in Russia since the emancipation than the quondam professor of Philosophy in the University of Moscow. A Russian of the Russians, married to Princess Shalikoff, daughter of a Russian poet, he was at one time so ardent an admirer of England and the English, that his friends reproached him for his Anglomania. A brilliant author, a learned professor, a fearless journalist, his chief distinction is due to the fact that he, more than any man, incarnated the national inspirations at three crises in Russian history.

"It was in 1863 that he particularly appealed to the patriotism of Russia. In that year the determination of the Poles that half of Russia should be included in the limits of the Poland to which a Constitution was about to be granted, brought them into violent collision with the Russian Government. All the Powers of Europe began to intermeddle. 'You must do this; you must not do that,' and so on. The dispatches came pouring in from this Court and from that, until even little Portugal and barbarous Turkey ventured to send us their prescriptions for pacifying Poland! Russians felt profoundly humiliated, and not a little indignant. 'Were we not to be masters in our own house? Were we to be treated as if we were the

vassals of the West?' These angry questionings filled every breast; and, amid the irritation occasioned by the intermeddling of the Foreign Courts, everything was forgotten but a stern resolve to vindicate the national independence. At that crisis in our history Mr. Katkoff came boldly to the front, embodied the thoughts of millions in his fiery articles, and gave voice and utterance to the patriotic enthusiasm of every Russian. When the storm had passed, and all danger of war was averted by the adoption of the independent policy which he had so vigorously advocated, the intrepid spokesman of the national sentiment occupied one of the highest places in the esteem of his countrymen ever attained by any journalist in Russia.

"Some years later, Mr. Katkoff came once more to the front. The question of classical education then excited intense interest throughout Russia; and the *Moscow Gazette* led the van of the fight which resulted in the complete victory of the classical party. As one result of this success, 'the Lyceum of the Grand-Duke Nicholas' was founded at Moscow in honour of the late Tzarewitch. Mr. Katkoff and Mr. Leontieff, his *alter ego*—and a very distinguished scholar—were associated at first in the superintendence of the new institution. Since the death of the latter—whose whole life was dedicated to Russia—Mr. Katkoff has discharged, alone, the duties of Principal.

"Another service rendered by Mr. Katkoff of very great importance was his support of one of the most distinguished women in Russia, Madame Sophie Fischer, who founded in Moscow a remarkable Classical Gymnasium for girls. The result of that enterprise is the greatest argument in favour of the Russian women's capacities and character. Nothing can be better than that establishment, and Russia

may well be proud of these two institutions, which cannot be outrivalled in Germany or England.

"The third great crisis in which Mr. Katkoff and the *Moscow Gazette* did good service to the Russian cause, was in the Slavonic movement during the Turkish War. He has never been identified with the Slavophile party, but when the Servian War awakened the national enthusiasm, Mr. Katkoff threw himself heart and soul into the Slavonic cause. He guided, directed, and sustained in his paper the tumultuous current of Russian opinion. The *Moscow Gazette* became once more the exponent of the national idea, and maintained that honourable position till his death in 1887.

"Mr. Katkoff published not only the *Moscow Gazette*, but also a monthly literary organ—the Russian *Messenger*. He was famous throughout the whole of Russia for his incisive style and his vigorous, hard hitting. The courage with which he defended the interests of his country, sometimes fearlessly attacking the Government, did not prevent his eldest daughter, Barbe, from being nominated Maid of Honour to Her Majesty the Empress."

After his death in 1887, Madame Novikoff contributed two articles to the *Pall Mall Gazette* doing honour to his memory. They appeared on the 17th and 21st of December. The following extracts touch upon the literary and philosophical activity of the great editor :—

"Katkoff, born on November 1, in 1818, was just coming of age when he first gave proof of his literary ability by sending to one of the St. Petersburg periodicals a translation of a German article on our Poushkine, by Varnhagen von Ense.

"'Our great poet,' says he in his introductory lines, 'has found at last an echo in the hearts of Germany, of Prussia. Can the heart of any Russian not throb with a sweet delight, with a manly pride, in perusing the tribute of admiration, coming from a German biographer and critic? There are few moments of such intense delight in our life as those we experienced in reading this noble response to Poushkine—to our own great Poushkine. It may, I daresay, make some people smile if we assert that Poushkine was a universal poet; one of those upon whom the whole of humanity looks with devoted reverence. Let them know that these enthusiastic views are not expressed by us only, but by a foreigner, not biassed by national partiality or prejudice. The article we offer you is published in a Berlin Review called *Jahrbücher für Wissenschaftliche Kritik*, founded by Hegel, that greatest philosopher, who realised the strong intellectual current, the aspirations of reason. Now it is edited by men worthy of their teacher. In the person of Hegel, Germany stretches out her hand to Russia, Germany representing the whole of scientific Europe, the whole of humanity.'

"Young Katkoff soon became a distinguished professor of philosophy at the University of Moscow, after having passed a couple of years at the Berlin University. His unaffected speech, his deep learning, his devotion to lofty ideas and doctrines, soon gathered round him many enthusiastic pupils. Unfortunately, some foolish limitations having been introduced in the teaching of philosophy, Katkoff unhesitatingly gave up his post, accepting no compromise with his conscience. But a man of his gifts and energy could and would not remain idle. In 1856 he was the brilliant editor of the best Moscow Review, the *Russky Vestnik*

(Russian Messenger). His English proclivities became one of its leading features. Macaulay and the Anglophile Tocqueville were often quoted. It was at this time that he was, for the above reason, nicknamed 'Lord Katkoff.' The inevitable development of the English parliamentary system, tending to the Swiss 'ad Referendum,' the want of stability of English Governments, the extraordinary deluge of speechmaking, the nervous desire to flatter electors, modified the enthusiastic Anglomania of his youth even before the reign of Lord Beaconsfield had naturally quenched Russian sympathies and belief in English fair play. At that time there was in Russia a great tendency towards childishly extreme views. Macaulay was not thought 'half advanced enough,' Tocqueville was far too English in his 'moderation.'

"Agnosticism and Positivism seemed more in accordance with 'the latest dictum of science,' as they used to term it. Katkoff was horrified at the deplorable ignorance of such views. He at a glance understood that such Radicalism could only bring his country to the verge of ruin. He seemed to foresee the Nihilistic movement which came later, not in Russia only, but in the whole world, and it grieved and frightened him particularly, because he knew his country well. Reckless, self-sacrificing Russians never stop half-way. This may be a noble feature, but when badly guided it may become monstrously fatal. You often see people, both in England and Germany, without any religious or moral belief; but they are kept in good order, and are harmless in their intercourse with others, simply because they are checked by all sorts of imaginary powers—be it Mrs. Grundy, be it the craving for respectability, or the prejudices of the Upper Ten. We Russians never kneel to

deities of that kind. We must have something solid, a religious 'categorical imperative,' as the Germans say. Ultra-Radical doctrines with us are most dangerous. Katkoff quickly realised that, and fought bravely, defiantly, passionately, as men of strong convictions and of great moral valour only do. Naturally, he very soon became hated, accused of obscurantism, and vehemently calumniated. He continued his work in spite of all—attacking wrongs, and sometimes horrifying our short-sighted censors who vainly tried to stop him. The late Emperor, Alexander II.—be this said to his honour—declared at last that he himself alone would be Katkoff's censor. Katkoff felt the Imperial kindness, but continued to speak out his mind, sparing neither Ministers nor institutions."[1]

"*December* 21, 1887.

"After the brilliant part which he played in the Polish crisis, a spontaneous demonstration was made in the shape of a voluntary subscription for a large silver centrepiece, representing a Russian of olden times holding an unfurled banner, which bears the motto 'Unity of Russia,' and which was presented by a large deputation to the eloquent and patriotic editor of the *Moscow Gazette*. Katkoff was very particular about the accuracy of his facts, weighing and sifting them with the most zealous care. But once he acquired a conviction, he fought for it with reckless courage. Truth being generally on his side, he as often won, and his opponents, no matter how high their position, collapsed. Thus in the railway question, and the Baltic Port and Libau, as also in that of Kieff and Warsaw, his opinion prevailed, contrary to that of the Governor-General Kotsebue,

[1] *Pall Mall Gazette*, December 17, 1887

and deprived Königsberg of a large portion of its former traffic.

"Katkoff's foresight was sometimes remarkable. Last February he called on me at St. Petersburg. I said that among many curious things spread abroad was the probable nomination of Prince Coburg as ruler of Bulgaria. 'But surely that is too monstrous to be true? A Roman Catholic, a perfect tool in the hands of the Jesuits and of Austria—that is out of the question!' exclaimed I. 'Well, it would be a disaster to poor Bulgaria; it would jeopardise their Church and their nationality; but I should not be surprised for my part if that came to pass,' rejoined he. Alas! he was right, and I was wrong. Nothing, of course, can be more painful to a Russian than to watch the fate that threatens our unfortunate co-religionists, and to think that all our sacrifices have not saved our Slavonic brethren from such deplorable chaos and anarchy. However, let us not despair. Political as well as private life has its trials, and every struggle helps to form character. But dangers can be avoided only when plainly realised. . . . As I have said, Katkoff appreciated the part played by France in Bulgaria, and saw in that policy good reason for an entente cordiale with her; while of Germany he became suspicious the moment he perceived her inclination to support Austrain intrigues.

"Katkoff died from overwork. He never allowed his wife or his friends to persuade him to take, however short, a holiday. 'It is useless to speak of rest,' was his curt reply. 'I have no time for that. I have the Lyceum, the *Moscow Gazette*, and the *Russky Vestnik* to attend to. Let us not talk of rest!' And he would go on—go on working, until death stopped him at last. He died too soon, far too soon. His

country deplored that loss with an exhibition of respect and feeling never before witnessed in the case of a private person. The popular demonstrations, headed by the Metropolitan of Moscow and the principal clergy, were quite extraordinary and most affecting. The Emperor sent a telegram to the widow expressing his deep sympathy and regret, calling this sad event 'a national loss.' Here, again, His Majesty showed himself a true and faithful representative of the Russian people." [1]

M. Gringmuth was one of Mr. Katkoff's successors both as the Principal of the Classical Lyceum of the Heir-Apparent Nicholas, and as Editor of the *Moscow Gazette*. Madame Novikoff says:—

"In spite of his foreign name, there never breathed a more devoted Greek Orthodox, patriotic Monarchist. Thus he naturally evoked the hostility, and sometimes even the hatred, of the Constitutional and Nihilistic parties. That hatred increased enormously during the Revolutionary riots in Moscow, when his house was surrounded with barricades and shrieking mobs. Instead of yielding, he published his Monarchical Programme. 'Greek Orthodox Church,' 'Autocracy,' and 'Patriotism' were his three ruling watchwords. His attempt, at first, seemed quite hopeless, but this noble, courageous man knew no fear, and persevered. His success was as tremendous as unexpected. People flocked round him, not in hundreds or thousands, but in tens of thousands."

Madame Novikoff always speaks of him with

[1] *Pall Mall Gazette*, December 21, 1887.

unstinted admiration. The Russian Liberals regarded him almost as a leper.

I was never forgiven by the Zemstvoists because I insisted upon contributing to the *Moscow Gazette* of 1905 an article in praise of the Douma. They did not object to the contents of the article, the damnable thing was the place where it appeared. I speak of men as I find them, and despite all the denunciations of the Liberals I found M. Gringmuth a very able man. No one could have been more frank than he in admitting the weakness at that moment of the cause which he nevertheless persistently championed, and no one in all the Conservative camp had so clear a conception of the necessity for organising and educating the electorate. He, at least, was thoroughly alive, whereas most of the men who called themselves Conservatives in the Monarchical Party seemed to be paralysed. In the evolution of a constitutional state it is as necessary there should be a well-organised Conservative opposition as that there should be a well-organised Progressive party. M. Gringmuth saw the need for organisation, and to meet the emergency he founded his Monarchical Party, nicknamed by the Revolutionists the Black Hundred, the especial *bête noire* of the Liberals.

His was almost the first attempt on the part of the Conservatives of Russia to do their proper share in maintaining the stability of the State and the authority of the Tsar. Madame Novikoff, with her usual intrepidity, boldly proclaims herself one of the " Black Hundred," all its excesses notwithstanding, just as Nationalist Irishmen swore by the Land League despite all the outrages in Connaught.

Mr. Katkoff in the *Moscow Gazette* did not always agree with Madame Novikoff's other editor, Ivan

VLADIMIR GRINGMUTH.
Founder of the Monarchical Party in 1906.

Aksakoff of the *Russ*—the organ of the Panslavonists. Madame Novikoff thus explained the difference between her two Editors :—

" The Panslavonic doctrine consists of three great tenets—(1) The Greek Orthodox Church, solely depending on the Œcumenical Councils, and having *no other* head ; (2) Autocracy, representing the principal aspirations of our nation, and acting as the guardian of our national honour and welfare; and (3) the National Party based on those two foundations, the support of which forms the duty of every honest Russian citizen.

" There are shades of opinion in questions of minor importance, different currents of thought. Thus, Aksakoff was more demonstrative, more vehement and passionate in the Slavonic and old Russian views, and was designated as ' the Slavophile,' while Katkoff, thanks to his Western culture, was at one time called ' the Western ' ; but people should well keep in mind that these differences were chiefly seen in questions of home policy. When Aksakoff died, Katkoff said : ' We disagreed in many points with Ivan Sérguéievitch, but never when the honour and dignity of Russia were at stake.'

" In order to realise the position of those two men in history, it is necessary to correctly understand their times. About the middle of this century the intellectual part of Russia, chiefly represented by Moscow, did not particularly care for foreign politics and the passing questions of the day, which very often only last one day. Questions relating to philosophy, theology, science, and fine arts, and their very principles, had more attraction, and absorbed the reflective minds. Thus one of the great topics of that time was the part which nationality should play in science. Science,

they said, was universal, unlimited by nationality. The Slavophiles insisted upon the necessity of that element. The Westerns opposed that view. Another subject was the real utility or the harmfulness of Peter the Great's reforms, and the effect of foreign influences on Russian culture and development. The 'Slavophiles' deprecated that policy, the Westerns defended it. These two currents opposed each other, striving more for eternal principles than for the petty interests of the hour. Wretched quarrels for position, career, decorations, money-worship, etc., had very little to do among these 'men of the year 1840,' as they were called. Unfortunately, that moral Arcadia did not last very long ; the Crimean War compelled them to become more matter of fact. Aksakoff enrolled himself among the militia. After the war was over, M. Aksakoff, who gave up all his fortune to his six sisters and mother, had to accept, for his daily bread, the directorship of a bank. This occupation, however uncongenial, he combined with journalism when he edited the *Russ*."

He was practically unknown in Western Europe until Madame Novikoff published a translation of his address to the Moscow Panslavonic Committee.

She indignantly repudiated the ridiculous accusation that M. Aksakoff was the head-centre of Revolutionary Russia :—

"As one of M. Aksakoff's numerous friends, I may be permitted to say that there never was a more monstrous assertion. M. Aksakoff, although no courtier, is devotedly loyal. His wife was our Empress's lady-in-waiting and governess to the Duchess of Edinburgh, and he himself, although abused in the Turkophile papers as a Russian Mazzini, is one

of the last men in the world to undertake a crusade against the Tsardom. Simple, honest, enthusiastic, a distinguished poet, M. Aksakoff is no conspirator; he is simply the leading spokesman of the Russian Slavs, by whom he was elected to the post of President of the Moscow Slavonic Committee with only one dissentient voice. Much surprise was expressed that there should be even one vote against his appointment. But that surprise was succeeded by a smile when it was announced that the solitary dissentient was M. Aksakoff himself."

M. Aksakoff's outspoken condemnation of the betrayal of the Slavs at the Berlin Congress led to his temporary banishment to his country residence. This official order provoked no end of amusement. "I'm quite ready to obey, but unfortunately I have no country place of my own," said Aksakoff. The man who delivered the order looked somewhat startled. Aksakoff stared at him, enjoying his surprise. His sister-in-law, Miss Catherine Tutcheff, came to the rescue, and invited him and his wife to her home near Moscow. His fellow-directors on the bank kept his place open for him during his absence, and paid him his salary when he returned;—he handed over the money to a fund of patriotic charity.

M. Aksakoff was an honest man, brave, incorruptible and idealistic. Madame Novikoff and her brother are amongst the few representatives of the school of which he was the resonant voice.

Twice, once at St. Petersburg and once at Moscow, crowded and enthusiastic meetings summoned by the Pan-Slav Committee acclaimed enthusiastically the services which Madame Novikoff has rendered to their cause. She was elected unanimously Honorary

Member of the Committee of the Society, an honour which she greatly prizes. The compliment was totally unexpected. She was sitting with Countess Ignatieff among the audience when General Ignatieff, who presided, startled her by referring in glowing terms to the passionate patriotism of those who, not content with working for the Slavonic cause at home, sallied forth into foreign lands, there to plant the banner and defend the cause of Russia and the Slavs. Then suddenly, to her amazement, he turned to Madame Novikoff, pointed her out to the assembly, publicly presented her with the badge of the Committee, and declared : "Of such gallant and intrepid warriors for our sacred cause there sits one in our midst, one of the most brilliant and devoted of them all. I ask you to recognise all she has done." The unanimous and continued plaudits of the meeting showed how truly General Ignatieff had interpreted the sentiments of his audience.

These tributes were not undeserved. In season and out of season, in good report and in ill, Madame Novikoff has laboured, unwearying, for the cause of Russia and the Slavs.

At Moscow the same thing happened later, when the tribute was paid by M. Gringmuth, founder of the Monarchical party and the President of the Society. After this she was publicly presented with the badge of the Society.

VASSILY VERESTCHAGIN.
Russian Artist.

CHAPTER XVII.

Verestchagin.

VERESTCHAGIN, the great Russian painter, who was one of the first victims of the Russo-Japanese war—he perished when the ironclad commanded by Admiral Makaroff was blown up by a Japanese torpedo outside Port Arthur—was one of Madame Novikoff's great friends. If I had been able to read Russian I should have been able to add many interesting extracts from his innumerable letters, but, alas! to another editor than myself must be entrusted the task of compiling from Madame Novikoff's Russian correspondence the sequel to this work. In place of extracts from Verestchagin's correspondence I must substitute notes of interviews and autobiographical fragments, in order to enable the reader to form some conception of the brilliant and heroic Russian artist who was one of the most remarkable of the coadjutors of Madame Novikoff in her lifelong labour in the cause of international peace.

"Verestschagin," said Madame Novikoff, when writing about him in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "is the Count Tolstoy of painters, the same genius, the same fearlessness, the same craving for what they think—sometimes wrongly—to be the truth, and perhaps occasionally the same exaggerated touch of realism. Both are glorious products of Russian life, of whom their country may be proud."

That was twenty years ago ; when Madame Novikoff was thinking only of Count Tolstoy as the author of *War and Peace*. For in those days the great novelist had not been obscured in her eyes by his later phase of a non-resisting Revolutionist. Count Tolstoy fought in the Crimean War. Verestchagin had graduated in the school of real war both in Europe and in Asia before he undertook, by the uncompromising realism of his paintings, to accustom the world to the uncompromising realism of war.

Verestschagin was a very remarkable man. Educated with a view to entering the navy, he developed such a talent with his pencil that he abandoned his destined profession and devoted himself to Art. While still a young man he began to travel, and spent several years in wandering throughout Asia. As he spoke English excellently he found himself at home in India. But for the most part he dwelt among his own people in Russian Turkestan, although he travelled far and wide in the debatable border-land which lies between the Chinese Empire and the Russian possessions. This discipline of the Desert may be regarded as the curriculum through which he passed to educate him for the mission to which he devoted his life. There, in the heart of the Central Asian wilderness, he experienced the extremities of heat and of cold, and familiarised himself with savagery in its most extreme form. It was his fortune to be one of the first Europeans to penetrate into the province of Ili, very soon after the suppression of the Mussulman revolt by the Chinese army—an awful story of massacre and devastation that has never been adequately realised by the Western world. That revolt cost from twenty to twenty-five million lives. The sight of human beings slaughtered, shot, beheaded, hanged, in all that region extending

from the frontier of China to Bulgaria, impressed itself indelibly upon the imagination of Verestchagin.

But it was not as a mere traveller that Verestchagin studied war. He was himself a soldier. He had fought in many wars, and freely admitted that he had killed many men. He himself was wounded when he took part in the attempt to blow up a Turkish gunboat in the Danube, at the beginning of the war with Turkey.

"I sometimes say," he remarked, "that men are everywhere the same. They are all animals, combatant, pugnacious, murderous animals. There is the tiger in every man : it is in his jaws and in his hands, which are but tiger's claws, which love to rend and slay. All peoples everywhere are fundamentally animals ; scratch them a little and you will always come upon the foundation."

If war were all killing, Verestchagin maintained, it would be more popular than it is to-day. But killing is but an incident in the horrible business. "The decisive charge, the actual shock of battle," said Verestchagin, "is not war, it is only a moment in war, and a moment which is the least terrible, and passes with such rapidity as hardly to form an appreciable element in the long-drawn-out misery of the campaign. Take each war and reckon up the whole of the time spent upon it. You will soon ascertain that by far the greatest part of the campaign is spent in suffering, great hardships, heavy labour and miseries. Weeks are spent in marching in blazing suns, in clouds of dust, or in toiling through mud, while the rains drench you to the skin. War means hunger, thirst, sickness, the pain of wounds, privations of all kinds—a reversion to the conditions of savage existence. All these last for days, for weeks, for months, while the

time that is passed in actual fighting is but a few hours."

Verestchagin was singularly frank and truthful. No man could have been more free from cant or less given to boasting. "I know," said he to me, "that having killed many a fellow-creature I have not the right to be sentimental. But war is very horrid. There is very little that is picturesque about it. And when men fall dead by the wayside, they lie like dull, sodden mushrooms, earthy and squalid. As I have seen it, so I have painted it. And that I have paid so much attention to war is due to the fact that nothing impressed me so much through all my various travels as the fact that, even in our time, people kill one another under all possible pretexts and by all possible means. The impression became so deep in my mind that, after much thinking of the matter over, I set myself to paint war as it is.

"The wound which nearly cost me my life enabled me to study hospital life, and to understand better the sufferings of those who are mangled in war. Although I have been through so many battles, and had to sketch, sketch, sketch all the time, while bullets were whistling round and shells bursting close to where I was standing, I never could overcome the horrid consciousness that I was going to be killed. I always felt death near, and when I heard every minute the swift whizz of the shell as it whisked past, or the rattling of the bullets against the wall, it seemed as if some one was repeatedly hammering all about my head. Of course in the moment of charge you forget everything in a sense of mad exhilaration, in which overcharged excitement finds vent in delirious shouting."

Verestchagin's close association with her hero Skobeleff naturally drew him in close sympathy to

Madame Novikoff. She shuddered as she heard him tell the awful story of the horrors of the Bulgarian campaign, of the sufferings that never would have been inflicted or endured but for the refusal of Lord Beaconsfield to unite with Russia to enforce the will of Europe on the recalcitrant Turk. Here, for instance, are some of Verestchagin's stories of that war which, together with Mr. Gladstone, she had striven so passionately to avert :—

"The day after the great battle of Plevna, the scene was terrible beyond description.

"In dry weather the patients in the field ambulances were comparatively comfortable. But when it rained, as it often did after a battle, they lay chilled in pools of mud and water. In the midst of all this carnage and murder the heroism of the Sisters of Mercy stood out in bright and clear relief. No wound was too horrible, no operation too hideous for them to shrink from their duty. I remember one soldier who had five or six wounds, whom the doctor himself did not care to approach without a cigar between his lips. The Sister of Mercy attended him constantly, cleaned and washed and bandaged his wounds from early morning till late at night. They were admirable."

Mr. Gladstone had always maintained throughout his long campaign for concerted coercion that the unfortunate Turks themselves had most reason to desire that Europe would enforce its own decree, instead of leaving Russia to act alone. How terribly that forecast was fulfilled, let Verestchagin tell :—

"The poor Turks taken prisoners of war suffered worse even than the Russians. No wounded prisoner was attended to until all the wounded on the side of

the victors had been seen to." Few things in the war left so painful an impression upon Verestchagin's mind as the scene in the Turkish hospital at Plevna, and the still more terrible scenes which were witnessed on the road by which the Turkish prisoners were driven northward to Russia. In the Turkish hospital at Plevna there were as many as thirty sick men in each house, the living groaning among the dead. The air was poisonous, and in some houses every one seemed to be dead, until, on looking more closely, some sign of life was visible in a body lying among a heap of corpses. The road from Plevna to the Danube was strewn with the bodies of wounded and frozen Turks. The frost set in so suddenly and with such severity that the Turkish prisoners, worn out with the privations of the stage, dropped by ones and twos along the road, and were frozen to death. "Again and again," Verestchagin said, "some of these poor fellows were set upon their feet, but they were so enfeebled that they fell down, never to rise again." As Verestchagin passed along the road he examined the faces of those dead men, who were lying in every conceivable position in the snow, and convinced himself that every face bore the impress of deep suffering.

As the long march continued, a fresh horror was added to the snow, when the carts and tumbrils began to drive over the dying and the dead. Their bodies were crushed into the snow, and helped to make a pavement of the road along which the survivors drearily plodded onward. "I remember a party of eight to ten thousand prisoners at Plevna overtaken by a snowstorm. They extended along the highroad for a great distance, and sat closely huddled together with heads bent down, and from all this mass of human beings there arose a dull moaning from thousands of voices as they slowly

and in measure repeated, 'Allah, allah!' The snow covered them, the wind blew through their chilled forms; no fire, no shelter, no bread. When the word of command to start was given, I saw some of the older, venerable Turks, probably fathers of families, crying like children, and imploring the escort to let them go as far as the town to dry their clothes, warm themselves, and rest; but this was strictly forbidden, for fear of contagious sickness, as there were such numbers of them, and only one answer was returned to all their supplications—'Forward! forward!'" These scenes enabled him to paint Napoleon's "Retreat from Moscow."

When the "Retreat from Moscow" was exhibited at Berlin, the Kaiser William II. said, "Pictures like these are our best guarantee against war." After looking long and earnestly at the Napoleon on tramp in the snow, he turned away with the remark—

"And, in spite of that, there will still be men who want to govern the world. But they will all end like this."

Was that why the Kaiser forbade the students in the military schools to see Verestchagin's Exhibition—a characteristic and interesting fact?

Verestchagin was a democrat to his finger-tips, a cosmopolitan, and a man who painted the Truth.

But Verestchagin was no revolutionist. He constantly preached the doctrine so hated by every Russian revolutionist: "One step at a time. Safely but slow, they stumble who run fast." He once remarked—

"The processes of Nature are slow but sure. Attempts to hurry the pace only result in a disastrous recoil. Look at France. A hundred years ago they

made a Revolution which was to force the arrival of the millennium, and now to-day look at France, and ask what has been gained by the revolutionary rush. France is still (1898) snuffing the remains of the Empire. They call me a 'red' in Russia, but in reality I am one of the most conservative of men. All my observations teach me that you can do nothing by violence, by attempting to force things. You must co-operate with the forces which are making for progress, and rejoice exceedingly if so be you are able to help forward the movement even by one little inch. Better do some good that lasts than grasp at a greater good which will not stay. Yes, I believe in progress, certainly that is a fact, but it is a slow progress, and there is an immense ground to be covered yet. There is time enough in the eternity of the future for endless advance ; but although we must never despair, neither must we be impatient. The process which took away the massive force from the jaws of the Mongol and built up the frontal bone of the civilised man is still at work, but there is much to be done. The cheek and jawbones diminish, while the teeth, hands and feet shrink. The huge carnivorous animal is manifestly on a march towards a higher type of intelligent existence ; and, if you can develop the Caucasian out of the Mongol, there might be," he concluded, "good reason for hoping that from the Caucasian in time something superior might be developed." Progress, however, though steady, is very slow, and Verestchagin had an absolute distrust of short cuts.

When the war broke out with Japan, Verestchagin went at once to the front, only to perish before the armies had joined in the shock of battle. In Bulgaria, with Skobeleff, he seemed to have a charmed life. He

was always permitted to go everywhere and see everything. "They used to ask me," said Verestchagin, "'Why do you poke your nose in everywhere? You will get it knocked off some day.' I said always I wished to see everything in order that I might paint everything. So I went everywhere and saw everything as much as any one can." He was faithful to his master passion to the last.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Armenian Question.

OF all the many thorny questions that are bound up in that congeries of knotty problems known as the Eastern Question, that of the Armenians is the most difficult. Since the Berlin Congress it is upon the Armenians more than on any other race that the full fury of racial and religious savagery has fallen. Yet the Armenians possessed a double guarantee for the safety of their life, honour, and property, one legal and general, the Berlin Treaty; the other illegal and particular, the Anglo-Turkish Convention. If the Treaty of San Stefano had been allowed to stand, the Turkish Government would have been directly responsible to the Russian Government for the good government of the Armenians. That responsibility was destroyed by the Berlin Congress. In place of the clause in the San Stefano Treaty, the Powers signed an International Treaty at Berlin whereby they guaranteed to the Armenians the reforms necessary for their security. Clause LXI. in the Treaty is precise and specific.[1]

[1] The following are the texts of the Treaties bearing upon this question :—

The 16th Article of the Treaty of San Stefano reads as follows : "As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements

THE EMPRESS ALEXANDRA OF RUSSIA
AND HER SISTER THE GRAND-DUCHESS SERGE.

The Sublime Porte, as usual, did nothing. The clause has been a dead letter. No ameliorations have been made, no reforms executed.

The Anglo-Turkish Convention, which was palmed off upon the British public as a new and special guarantee for the protection of the Armenians, turned out in the end to be the chief barrier against any effective concerted action on their behalf.

Madame Novikoff, writing in the *Northern Echo* immediately after the Liberal victory in 1880, set out the Russian point of view very clearly, after describing the sufferings of the Armenians at the hands of the Turks :—

"If the policy of Russia were one of aggrandisement, she could desire nothing better than that this state of things should continue. . . .

"But Russia does not seek the annexation of Armenia. In proof of this she desires the execution

and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians."

On May 30, 1878, a memorandum, signed in London by the Marquis of Salisbury and Count Schouvaloff, said (No. 7): "The promises respecting Armenia stipulated in the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano must not be made exclusively to Russia, but to England also."

At the Berlin Congress, at the sitting of July 9, Lord Salisbury read without comment the following clause, "agreed upon between the plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and Turkey" :—

"The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the ameliorations and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. *It will make known periodically the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will watch them.*"

This wording, adopted without discussion, became, with a slight change of form, that of the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin, which ends as follows: "It will make known periodically the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application."

of the clause of the Berlin Treaty which, if enforced by the Powers, will remove the causes which at present are compelling the Armenians to look to their absorption by Russia as their only possible escape from terrible wrongs. Will the new Government loyally co-operate with us in compelling the Turks to fulfil their promises, or, in other words, will they help us in compelling the Sultan to abandon so much of his power as will enable the poor Armenians to organise for themselves some kind of autonomy as a defence against the ravages of the Kurds and the pillage of the Turks ? "

Mr. Gladstone for once turned a deaf ear to this appeal. He had so much to do compelling the Turks to fulfil their Treaty obligations to Montenegro and to Greece that the Armenians were left to fend for themselves. When the Armenian delegates came to London pleading for the rights secured them by the Treaty, Mr. Bright told them with blunt candour that Europe could do nothing for them, and that England could do nothing for them. " Go to St. Petersburg and ask the Russians to help you, they are the only Power that can."

But Mr. Bright failed equally with Mr. Gladstone to realise that the Anglo-Turkish Convention bound England, so long as she continued in occupation of Cyprus, to defend the Turks by force of arms against any attempt on the part of Russia to use against the Turks the only argument to which they were amenable.

Hence the Armenians were in a hopeless plight. The Berlin Treaty was a dead letter, and the only Power which could have intervened effectively was debarred from doing so by the very instrument which

had been ostensibly framed for the purpose of guaranteeing the reform of Asiatic Turkey. The straightforward, courageous policy would have been to have evacuated Cyprus, handing it over to Greece to be held as a pledge until such time as the promised reforms had been carried out in Thessaly and Epirus. Unfortunately, Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet shrank from so heroic a policy. As a result the Anglo-Turkish Convention has been a stumbling-block in the way of Russian action in Armenia for the last thirty years.

Unless this fact is clearly realised it is impossible to understand how it was that Russian policy in Armenia in 1896 was in opposition to the policy favoured by Mr. Gladstone, or how it was that the very last exchange of letters between Mr. Gladstone and Madame Novikoff was marked by a sharp antagonism, contrasting very sadly with the long correspondence which it brings to a close with a somewhat jarring note. Without venturing to anticipate the verdict of history, I think the reader will have no difficulty in deciding that the fault, if fault there be, did not lie on the side of Madame Novikoff.

In September 1889, Madame Novikoff contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* an article on Crete and Armenia.

Mr. Gladstone at once wrote to welcome her return to her familiar rôle of pleader for the oppressed Christians of the East :—

"HAWARDEN, *September* 16, 1889.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I am glad you are come to work up the Cretan and especially the Armenian case. These atrocities in Armenia are a great disgrace to us. If we have not power to arrest

them we ought not to have undertaken the task and filched Cyprus—a burdensome theft in return.

"If I come to spend any time in London, I shall hope to call.—Believe me, sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"I have read Marie Bashkirtseff, am reading *Le Crime et le Chatiment*. So you see my eye is on Russia."

This letter is interesting, if only because it is the last in which Mr. Gladstone spoke of Russia and Armenia without a note of distrust or of indignation. Madame Novikoff's plea, even though backed by Mr. Gladstone's Amen, had no result.

It was not till the beginning of 1895 that Mr. Gladstone appears to have come to the conclusion that the Russian Government could no longer be relied upon to help the Armenians. Russia, England, and France were actively engaged in settling the Cretan question. But Armenia lay out of the range of the guns of warships, and for Armenia nothing was done.

So as was his wont when he wished to appeal directly but informally to the Russian Government, Mr. Gladstone, on the eve of his last cruise in the *Tantallon Castle*, addressed the following letter to Madame Novikoff :—

"HAWARDEN, *January* 10, 1895.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I do not like to go into your neighbourhood without making use of the addressed cover you kindly left with me. To-morrow we are to embark in the *Tantallon Castle* (a large Cape steamer) for the Baltic, and salt water has always been so kind to me that I rely upon it as the likeliest

means of getting rid of a cough—a disagreeable guest at 85, which has made me its victim for the last nine or ten days.

"I had hopes of a glance at St. Petersburg, but am told it is too far. It is the only one of the great capitals I have not seen. Your Government and mine are engaged (with France) in a common enterprise, of no consequence to their power, of little perhaps to their credit to the world, but of much to their character in the true sense, if there be such things in the world as Christianity and duty. Only one thing do I now desire: it is that the associated Governments shall not shrink from threatening force, or from using it should the cause arise, especially as (humanly speaking) it can only arise in a mild form. There need not be a Navarino. But how much weaker the cause then was! The idea of an autonomous Armenia has been given up, as I believe, in deference to Russia; this heightens and tightens her obligations for what remains.

"We had a somewhat similar position as to Greece and Montenegro in 1880. I well remember the conduct of the Russian Government at that time. It was everything that could be reasonably desired. I look back with much pleasure upon an acquaintance, unhappily of short duration, with Prince Lobanoff, when he was in London. I hope his Library prospers. And if you have at any time communication with him I would beg you to recall me to his remembrance. The English Government are in the fullest possession of my sentiments: and my hope is, do not disapprove them. I am much pressed to take public steps; but this I eschew to the utmost. God prosper the right!—Yours sincerely, W. E. GLADSTONE.

"I must not conceal from you, though I write it

with pain, the present impression here is that Russia, and Russia alone, is the present impediment to effectual measures.

"But I hope your country will be mindful alike of her honour and of humanity."

The Russian position was plainly set forth at the time by Sir Frank Lascelles, then our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in a dispatch to Lord Salisbury, dated July 3, 1895, from which the following is an extract :—

"In the course of conversation this afternoon, Prince Lobanoff told me that he had seen a letter addressed by Mr. Gladstone to a correspondent whose name it was not necessary to mention,[1] in which he had expressed his regret that there appeared to be a divergence of opinion between England and Russia as regards the Armenian question. Prince Lobanoff had informed Mr. Gladstone's correspondent, who had consulted him as to the reply which should be returned, that there certainly was a divergence of opinion between the two countries, and that it was impossible for Russia, on account of her geographical position and the large number of Armenians living on Russian territory, to countenance any scheme which might lead to the creation of anything in the nature of an autonomous State in Asia Minor. Russia had always been considered the protector of the Christians in the Turkish dominions, and she would be only too happy to obtain greater securities for

[1] Familiar quotation, suggested but not printed in the Blue Book :—

"Oh no! we never mention her,
Her name is never heard;
My lips are now forbid to speak
That once familiar word."

their welfare and the protection of their lives and property, but her direct interests on the frontier forbade her to indulge in the philanthropic dreams which seem to prevail in England, whose interests, on account of her insular position and distance from the Armenian districts, were not directly affected."

Mr. Gladstone was, in 1895, within three years of his death. He was in his eighty-sixth year, the last but one of his political existence. It was the year of many memorable happenings. At its opening, the Jameson Raid plunged South Africa into war and preparations for war. Before it closed Europe was disturbed and mankind outraged by the massacres of the Armenians at Constantinople. Mr. Gladstone's last political effort was to make his last political speech and spend his last political force in urging the Government of Lord Salisbury to undertake, single-handed if need be, the coercion of the Sultan. He was checkmated by Lord Rosebery, who resigned the leadership of the Liberal party by way of emphasising his conviction that the adoption of Mr. Gladstone's policy would plunge us into a European war.

Mr. Gladstone attributed Lord Rosebery's action to the fact that Russia and Germany, Austria and France, were ready to veto any advance on our part upon Constantinople. He denounced the idea that any independent action on our part was to be made chargeable for producing war in Europe, as a mistake almost more deplorable than almost any committed in the history of diplomacy. He was particularly irritated with Russia, whose Government under Prince Lobanoff opposed any armed intervention in Turkey. It is this which explains the unaccustomed tone of his last letter to Madame Novikoff.

Mr. Gladstone was very angry. Madame Novikoff had been writing letters in the *Times* and in the *Daily Chronicle* in defence of the policy of Prince Lobanoff. Mr. Gladstone, in reply to a letter which she had addressed to him on the subject, wrote to her on October 22, 1895, saying, "I shall keep myself to myself." His letter showed that he felt very keenly the humiliation which the triumph of the Sultan had inflicted upon Russia, France, and England, but it was couched in terms which, in view of the recent turn of events in Turkey, render its textual reproduction inadvisable.

Prince Lobanoff was proof against Mr. Gladstone's indignant remonstrances. Madame Novikoff stated in the *Observer* the Russian case against armed intervention, which must mean a Russian war against a Turkish Empire guaranteed by Great Britain against attack. But Mr. Gladstone was not to be pacified. On February 3, 1896, he wrote to her from Biarritz:—

"I had seen already your letter in the *Observer*. As to the former or Jingo period you know my strong and never concealed sense of the service you performed. As to this miserable Armenian question I am for the present silent. It is very possible that England may have become unpopular in Armenia, whether deservedly or not we shall shortly know. From a recent speech of Balfour's I guess that Ministers intend to throw the blame elsewhere. I hope they will give us the means of judging. All I at present know is that there is terrible guilt and shame somewhere; besides that which belongs to the Sultan."

On March 7, 1896, Mr. Gladstone sent Madame Novikoff the following postcard:—

"Accept my best thanks for Mr. Birkbeck's book. I am reading it with sympathies I think the same as yours. There is in London an Eastern Church Association, which, if General Kiréeff's work has obtained the approval of Bishops and quite able authorities would, I *should think*, probably be glad to promote its publication.

"I cannot profess to be satisfied with your argument about Armenia. My mind is full of grief and also of disgust at the attitude of Europe: and most deplorable is the case of those who shall eventually be found to have had the largest share in bringing it about, be they who they may.

"We have arranged for going home next week, and I am due at Hawarden (say) 13th. My impression is that Purcell's work is in flamboyant circulation. It is indeed an historical event, and we have not yet nearly done with it. My name appears in it too often. —Sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

"Purcell's work" was, of course, his *Life of Cardinal Manning*.

While Mr. Gladstone was arraigning Russia as the great impediment to armed intervention in Asia Minor, it is somewhat curious to find that the Turks themselves were firmly convinced that the Armenian atrocities were invented in the interests of Russia! At a meeting of Moslems held in London about this time a sympathetic report records that—

"The points insisted upon, and certainly argued with great ability, were that no authentic facts as to the alleged atrocities in Armenia were yet to hand; that the agitation was political and not religious; that religion should be kept out of the question; and that

Russian 'semi-official' agents and Madame Olga de Novikoff were probably at the bottom of the whole business."

Prince Lobanoff having accepted the Order of the Medjidie from the Sultan, a great roar of indignation went up from Western Europe. About this time Madame Novikoff sent Mr. Gladstone a reprint of an article entitled "Souvenirs," which she had published in the *Nouvelle Revue*, and in so doing had referred to Armenia. In reply came a postcard from Hawarden thanking her for her recollections, "which are sure to be of great interest." But on Armenia he refused to say a word to a Russian after the decoration of Prince Lobanoff.

There was no further exchange of letters till September, when, as the following letter shows, Mr. Gladstone, instead of cooling down, was still at white heat :—

"HAWARDEN, *September* 3, 1896.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—It has indeed been an age, and what a terrible age, since we communicated.

"We are, I do not doubt, in harmony on the subject of the union of Christendom—that precious but distant aim.

"But our subject has always been the East—that subject which has passed into its blackest chapter, and has covered all England with indelible disgrace. I cannot write to you upon it, and especially on the share which Russia has had in it, except in *such* terms as you a Russian ought not to read with patience.

"It is better then that we should not communicate, until another and very different chapter shall open.

God grant it may be soon. My recollections of Lobanoff when he was in England are of a most pleasant, kindly, and cultivated gentleman.—Believe me, silently, but sincerely yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

Madame Novikoff replied as follows, the last letter she ever wrote to Mr. Gladstone :—

"MARIENBAD, AUSTRIA,
September 9, 1896.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—No, you are too kind and too generous to allow me to lose my patience.

"Remembering all your kindness of good old times I can never misunderstand the good motive which always guides your outspoken pen. But you can grieve nevertheless, and I feel bound in defence of my country to let you know what took place at one of the Coronation balls. Lobanoff seemed anxious to have a quiet chat with me, and we sat down together on a sofa. He then said, 'I am glad to thank you for all your efforts to bring about friendly feelings between England and Russia.'

"'Well, confess,' answered I, smiling, 'that so far as our Foreign Office is concerned, I find no great help there!'

"Lobanoff became quite serious. 'You refer to the terrible Armenian question?' he asked me.

"'Just so,' replied I, very firmly. 'But how,' retorted he, 'can we Russians ignore the meaning and importance of the Cyprus Convention, which compels England to oppose Russia whenever a serious danger threatens the integrity of Turkey?'

"'Well,' observed I, 'this is true enough, but

there is decidedly a great change in English opinion about the sacredness of that treaty.'

"'No doubt,' replied he; 'I am not so badly informed as you suppose. I know all about that healthy change for the better. But nevertheless *that* anti-Russian treaty still exists. Do you suppose for one moment that if England were to relinquish her obligations under that treaty we should fail to immediately respond with proposals for a new departure?'

"Here we were interrupted by Sir Nicholas O'Conor, who joined us. But all that I heard from my people—not less interested in the Christian cause than yourself—I put into a French article which I am sending you by this post, and which I hope you will have the kindness to read. It is a short paper, and truthfulness is its only merit. Still, you may perhaps ponder over it for a few minutes.

"Mr. Chamberlain's declarations the other day[1] have been a new blow to us, as he seemed more anxious than ever to maintain for England that wretched island which would be so gratefully accepted by Greece. I hope you will see our Emperor when he comes to England.—Always gratefully yours,

"Olga Novikoff."

Mr. Gladstone, still smarting somewhat under what he regarded as the defection of his former ally, replied on September 13 with some acerbity and at some length, maintaining that the Sultan had "been informed long ago that the Covenant" to defend Asiatic Turkey under the Cyprus Convention "fell

[1] Mr. Chamberlain's declarations are to be found in his speech on the Colonial Estimates at the close of the Session of 1896, when he spoke as if we intended to remain in Cyprus for ever.

to the ground by his breach of faith in not giving reforms."

Madame Novikoff did not reply to Mr. Gladstone direct, but she was in no way convinced by this rebuke, nor is it very surprising that even Mr. Gladstone's immense prestige failed to convince her that Russia was not justified in maintaining an attitude of reserve. The controversy turned upon the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, by virtue of which Lord Beaconsfield filched Cyprus. Lord Rosebery held that the Convention was practically dead, but as the dispute was not with him but with Mr. Gladstone, we need not concern ourselves about his theory. It is difficult, in face of Mr. Gladstone's letter, to realise that he, on the other hand, had maintained that the Anglo-Turkish Convention, so far from being abrogated, was in such full force as to afford us a legitimate ground for making war on the Sultan! He summarised his view of the case as follows. The case then stands briefly thus in the *Nineteenth Century* for October 1896:—

"We are entitled to demand of the Sultan the immediate fulfilment, under his treaty with us, of his engagements, and to treat his non-compliance as, under the law of nations, other breaches of treaty are, or may be, dealt with.

"We have in the face of the world bound ourselves to secure good government for Armenia and for Asiatic Turkey.

"And for thus binding ourselves we have received what we have declared to be valuable consideration in a virtual addition to the territory of the Empire.

"All this we have done, not in concert with Europe, but by our own sole action, on our own sole responsibility.

"However we may desire and strive to obtain the co-operation of others, is it possible for us to lay down this doctrine? England may give for herself the most solemn pledges in the most binding shape, but she now claims the right of referring it to some other person or persons, State or States, not consulted or concerned in her act, to determine whether she shall endeavour to the utmost of her ability to fulfil them.

"If this doctrine is really to be adopted, I would respectfully propose that the old word 'honour' should be effaced from our dictionaries, and dropped from our language."

Mr. Gladstone may have been right or he may have been wrong, in this contention. But whether right or wrong, his argument is conclusive evidence, so far as he is concerned, as to the correctness of the Russian view that the Convention was still in existence, was still in full force, and might at any moment be invoked as a living instrument to justify warlike action. This being the case, it is not difficult to understand the position taken up by Russia at that time. Consider for a moment what the Anglo-Turkish Convention really is, and to what it committed us. Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, writing at the time in the *Fortnightly Review*, had little difficulty in proving, by merely quoting its provisions, that from the Turkish point of view the Convention was in full force. For he argued, "in virtue of that Convention alone, England has occupied and administered Cyprus during eighteen years, she still occupies and administers it, and she thus occupies and administers avowedly and professedly for no other purpose than to enable her to carry out her engagement to defend Asiatic

Turkey by force of arms against further Russian attack."

Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bowles, the most conspicuous exponents of the opposing Turkophobes and Turkophiles, were at one as to the binding validity of the Convention. This greatly simplified the polemical task of Madame Novikoff. Writing in the *Times* and *Daily Chronicle*, she vigorously defended the policy of Prince Lobanoff against Mr. Gladstone and other assailants. She pointed out that Lord Beaconsfield had expressly justified the Anglo-Turkish Convention because it bound us in advance to take up arms in defence of the Sultan if in ten, fifteen, or twenty years Russia should again cross the Turkish frontier. Lord Beaconsfield's words, said Madame Novikoff, had shaped the policy of Prince Lobanoff :—

"For, though uttered in 1878, they are living still, standing on record as the deliberate conviction of the English Prime Minister as to the policy England was certain to adopt if we had supported this year the Armenian cause by force of arms."

Lord Beaconsfield said :—

"Whoever might have been the Minister and whatever the party in power, the position of the Government would have been this. There must have been hesitation for a time, there must have been a want of decision and firmness, but no one could doubt that ultimately England would have said, 'This will never do ; we must prevent the conquest of Asia Minor and must interfere in this matter to assist the cause of Russia.' No one, I am sure, in this country who merely considers this question can for a moment doubt that that must have been the ultimate policy of this country.

"Therefore" (he went on to explain—I summarise the points of a long speech) "in order to remove any possible doubt on the subject, the voice of England should be clearly, firmly, and decidedly expressed in advance," and this he claimed he had effected by the conclusion of the Cyprus Convention. There was to be no more hesitating, doubting, and considering "contingencies." England was, once for all, definitely committed to defend the Asiatic frontier of the Ottoman Empire against any advance of the Russian Army in any quarrel, "Bulgarian" or otherwise.

"This," he declared, "was 'the ultimate policy' of England," and he embodied it for all men to see in the Cyprus Convention. Lord Salisbury had previously described that Convention as an undertaking given "fully and unreservedly" to prevent any further encroachments by Russia upon Turkish territory in Asia.

"That," said Madame Novikoff, "was plain speaking. The Convention of Cyprus, therefore, was a document prepared to prevent Russia taking any action for the protection of the Armenians. It means war—war by England, by sea and land all round the world, against Russia if she advances a single company of armed police into the valleys of Armenia. And with this Convention still in force you blame Russia for not heartily joining in operations against Abdul, who is defended against the penalty of indulging his impulses by the full and unreserved pledge that the 'ultimate policy' of England—convention or no convention, and therefore reforms or no reforms—is war against Russia if she lays a finger on Asia Minor!

"Of course I shall be told—nay, I have already been told, even by Mr. Gladstone himself—that the

THE GRAND-DUCHESS ALEXANDRA JOSEPHOVNA.
Widow of the Grand Duke Constantine.

Cyprus Treaty contains no obligation to protect the Assassin in Armenia except on condition of reforms, and that the Sultan has been informed long ago that the covenant fell to the ground by his breach of faith in not giving the reforms.

"This, I confess, is news to me, and in Russia we know nothing of any such abandonment of the Convention by the English Government. We shall indeed be glad if the evidence of the formal repudiation of the Convention can be published without delay.

"It would, I think, be a relief to many consciences in this country, and in Europe the effect could only tend to restore that confidence in England which was so rudely shaken when the Convention was signed. There is, it must be admitted, some excuse for our ignorance of this momentous resolve on your part, because Cyprus, which you occupy and administer solely by virtue of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, is to this day in your possession. Nor will the abandonment of the Convention be seriously credited until it is followed up by the abandonment of Cyprus.

"When that is done the chief obstacle in the way of concerted action for the coercion of the Sultan 'of the good impulses' will be removed and a new departure will be possible."[1]

In the *Daily Chronicle* Madame Novikoff pressed her arguments home as follows :—

"When I hear English people abusing Russia for not volunteering to occupy Armenia, I simply marvel.

"When England spends one half as much in a century for the deliverance of the Armenians as we have spent in a single campaign for any one of the Christian races of the East, English journals may

[1] *The Times*, October 8, 1896.

reproach us with being slack in the cause of liberation. But not till then.

"Have the good people of your country forgotten the Cyprus Convention? Do they not know that England has drawn a line between Russia and Armenia, which we can only cross on peril of war, not with Turkey alone, but with England, as the ally of the very Power whose horrible crimes you wish us single-handed to redress?

"The written Convention stands. Until it is torn into fragments, and as publicly repudiated as it was secretly concluded, Russia cannot believe that the English Government and the English people seriously wish her to undertake the occupation and administration of the Armenian provinces.

"Russia wants peace. Russia is passionately desirous of being permitted breathing-time, growing-time, without the fret and danger of war threatened or war made. Russia would eagerly hail any practical proposal for beginning the simultaneous disarmament of Europe by an agreement to arrest all further armaments, and therefore Russia protests against the light-headed, reckless fashion in which some Englishmen are brandishing lighted torches on the powder magazines of Europe. But if we are to use force to overcome the reluctance of the Sultan to give effective guarantee for the decent government of his oppressed subjects, do not let us incur so tremendous a risk without having a definite object.

"To place the whole of the Sultan's dominions under European commissions—yes, that would be worth while. But going to war in order to improve the administration of three provinces inhabited partly by Armenians and Kurds on the Russian frontier—well, I doubt."

The suggestion that the Eastern Question might be worth raising if it were to be dealt with once for all was elaborated by Madame Novikoff in an article entitled "Proposals for a New Departure," which was the last of all her letters that Prince Lobanoff ever read. It is a thoroughly characteristic deliverance, attuned to that familiar chord of that Anglo-Russian entente which has ever vibrated in all her writings for thirty years :—

"There are unfortunately many, far too many, difficulties of old standing, which ought to be removed, and might be removed, if it were remembered that they never will be solved without the aid of Russia. It reminds me sometimes of those padlocks which will only open when turned to certain letters. The East is such a lock. No other key will open it, till the letters have been arranged thus :—

ENTENTE.

"I say *entente*, though that is a foreign word, in preference to alliance. *Entente* means good understanding as to freedom of action within certain zones, co-operation (if necessary) within other zones, and good comradeship everywhere. Alliance may mean anything. It may mean too little; it may mean too much. Alliances often cripple as much as help. Some alliances, indeed, are entered into rather to restrain the reckless impetuosity of a friend than to strengthen his power of action.

"But *entente* is the right word. A celebrated Magyar and fierce enemy of Russia once described himself as a 'Death-prophesying bird,' continually croaking in the ears of Europe ominous predictions of its coming doom. I am like Kossuth in only one

respect. I am monotonous in the iteration and reiteration of my prophecies, which, however, are not prophecies of doom, but of deliverance. I want to be a life-prophesying bird, a bird of the morning that rises in the East, a harbinger of Peace, of Hope, of Prosperity to come, and I want all those who have sympathised with my work ever since I began to regularly spend my winters in England, to help me, even more than before, in a task which, of course, is much beyond my sole power.

"'Light, light, more light,' as said the dying Goethe—that is what is needed, when we try to study such difficult questions as those which agitate the East.

"I have been somewhat severely taken to task for having taunted England with her past misdeeds, instead of supporting her in her well-doing. But the accusation is unjust. I reminded you of your actions in the past in order to emphasise my plea for a recognition of your responsibility in the present and in the future.

"You asked: What was Russia's policy? And I replied: Russia's policy is to let England make the first move. 'The initiative,' I said, 'is yours. Russia will not fail to back you up in any action really calculated to maintain peace and protect the unhappy Armenians.'

"Well, you have made your move. You have taken your initiative, and with what result? Mr. Gladstone, with his usual fearlessness and straightforwardness, gives a vivid picture of the present state of things. I see in mind the wretched Sultan, whom God has given as a curse to mankind, waving his flag in triumph, and his adversaries, at his feet, are Russia, France, and England.

"His sublime Majesty's triumph means the con-

tinuation of outrages and massacres—in one word, a condition of existence where existence becomes impossible. Anarchy is infectious. It needs all the power of disciplined Russia to resist the contamination of such foul neighbourhood among our own population in the Caucasus. Political panic is not a healthy atmosphere—it upsets the nerves of contiguous nations.

"Pardon my plain speaking, but I cannot speak differently. What recent events have demonstrated is the impotence of England for good in the protection of these subject races of the East. Alas! there was no need to demonstrate her colossal power for mischief. This is to act as a dog in the manger, baffling the exertions of other Powers which could and would protect the Christians if they were permitted. That is her ancient historic rôle in these regions.

"When, as recently, she tries to reverse her policy, and attempts to exact reforms from the Sultan, she fails, and of necessity must fail, for this reason: her only engine of coercion, the fleet, can only be applied efficaciously at Constantinople, and such application would be immediately followed by the destruction of the Ottoman Empire—the one thing which all the Powers are naturally anxious to avoid.

"The Sick Man is very sick, sick nigh unto death, but to lance his heart would kill him off-hand.

"Yes, that operation upon the heart is England's only measure—a potent one, no doubt, but too potent, and to abolish the Sultan is simply to precipitate the general scramble for the wreck of his Empire.

"'What is the Eastern Question?' My answer to this is always the same. It is to preserve intact the territorial *status quo*, especially the nominal authority of the Sultan in Constantinople, while

remodelling entirely the administration by substituting local autonomies under the ægis of a European Commission throughout all his subjects' provinces. The English policy of coercion at Constantinople endangers the first without securing the last object of European diplomacy.

"The true policy is to tolerate the Sultan's presence at Constantinople, but at the same time to apply the only effective method of coercion possible in the shape of a military occupation of the provinces whose populations are cutting each other's throats.

"England has no army with which to undertake the operations necessary in Turkey. But other Powers are not so destitute of material means for the protection of the Christians.

"Bulgaria is quite capable of occupying and administering with European sanction the province of Macedonia. France has once already occupied the Lebanon. In case of need, I suppose, she may be induced to do so again. Nor is it necessary that her area of occupation should be limited to the Syrian coasts. Russia, and Russia alone, has the means ready to hand for the pacification of Armenia. Speaking for myself alone, without the slightest authority from any one on earth, I should say that if Lord Salisbury and the Powers were to put aside their jealousies, and ask Russia to send an army of occupation to Erzeroum and Trebizonde, it would promptly restore order in Armenia, and teach the Kurds to respect the will of Europe.

"Do not mistake me. We, in Russia, have no ambition to bell the cat. It is thankless work doing policeman for Europe. But Armenia is on our beat, and there is no one else who can answer for order in Sassoun.

"So long as the Powers only issue protocols and extort irades, nothing will change for the better. But the day on which a European regiment occupies a Turkish province, the scene will change as by magic. The Sultan at least knows when the Powers mean business, and until you can show him that it is business you mean, and not mere babble, Mr. Gladstone should amend his phrase. For the Sultan, if given by God to be 'a curse to mankind,' is maintained as such in his evil domination by the jealousy with which England regards Russia."

Prince Lobanoff had read with profound interest the letters on Armenia which Madame Novikoff had contributed to the *Daily Chronicle,* and had made them the subject of more than one diplomatic conversation. To all outward appearance, her policy—not for the first time—seemed to be running directly counter to the policy of the Russian Foreign Office. Madame Novikoff was then, as always, true to the traditional rôle of Russia as protector of the Christian East.

"When even Mr. Gladstone," said Madame Novikoff, following up her vigorous polemic, "who used to denounce the Cyprus Convention so fiercely, now puts it forward as justifying England's isolated action against Turkey, Russians can hardly regard it as non-existent, except, of course, from the point of view of international law. We have always ignored it. It was from the very first illegal and in contradiction of existing treaties. But we knew England was bound by it—voluntarily bound—and from that obligation she will not escape while her flag flies over Cyprus. The case is, however, worse than we believed. We thought that Mr. Gladstone

at least regarded it as a worthless sham, although Lord Salisbury, its author, might treat it as a reality. We now learn[1] that Mr. Gladstone (Mr. Gladstone of all the world!) regards it as possessing such validity and solidity as to furnish a basis for English intervention in Turkey.

"But if so, *a fortiori* it must furnish a *casus belli* against Russia if she intervened in Armenia. For England's right to coerce the Sultan under the Convention is a deduction, or an inference. Her obligation to defend him set forth in the Convention is categorical.

"It really seems as if you had forgotten your obligations, not even to the Armenians, but even to the Sultan. For instance, I am told sometimes, with an emphasis more remarkable for its vigour than its courtesy, that it is false and absurd to say that England is bound to defend the Sultan; because the promise was conditional upon reforms being carried out, and that, as the reforms have not been executed, you have informed him that you are thereby released from your undertaking to defend the Asiatic frontier of his Empire from Russia.

"Now, in discussing this weighty and vital question, it is useless to go to any authorities but the original document.

"As Englishmen generally, including some of the leading English statesmen, seem to have forgotten the text of the famous (or infamous) Convention, I reproduce the clauses. No honest man can read them without admitting that they prove conclusively, first, that your engagement to join your forces to those of the Sultan in defending his Asiatic frontier against us is made unconditionally the promise to execute

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, October 1896.

reforms, and the assignment of Cyprus was only given by the Sultan in return for your promise to defend him :—

"'Her Majesty the Queen and His Imperial Majesty, being mutually animated with the sincere desire of extending and strengthening the relations of friendship happily existing between the two Empires, have resolved upon the conclusion of a Convention of defensive alliance, with the object of securing for the future the territories of Asia of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan. Their Majesties have accordingly chosen and named their plenipotentiaries, to wit, etc., who have agreed upon the following articles :—

"'Art. 1. If Batoum, Ardahan, Kars, or any of them, shall be retained by Russia, or if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, as fixed by the definitive Treaty of Peace, England engages to join His Imperial Majesty the Sultan in defending them by force of arms.

"'In return His Imperial Majesty the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two Powers in the Governments and for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these territories.

"'And in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagements, His Imperial Majesty the Sultan further consents to assign the island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England.

"'Art. 2 provides for ratification in a month.'

"The Convention is dated June 1878. An annexe was appended on July 1, the last clause of which is as follows :—

"'VI. That if Russia restores to Turkey, Kars and the other conquests made by her in Armenia during the last war, the island of Cyprus will be evacuated by England, and the Convention of June 4 will be at an end.'

"If any doubt could possibly be entertained to this, it is removed by the last article in the annexe which is quoted above. This provides that if Russia shall at any time surrender to the Sultan, Kars and the other conquests made in Armenia, Cyprus shall be evacuated, and the Convention will be at an end. Clearly, therefore, Cyprus has nothing to do with reforms.

"For if, at this moment—while not one single reform has been executed—if Russia were to invite the perpetrator of the massacres at Sassoun and at Constantinople to extend the area of his slaughterings to Kars and to the territory we rescued from his grasp in 1878, you would be bound to evacuate Cyprus, and the Convention would be at an end.

"Russia, therefore, is compelled reluctantly to recognise the fact that, as long as your flag flies over Cyprus the Convention is not at an end; that the defensive alliance exists, and on the first serious movement of the Russian army to avenge the massacres of Sassoun, the Sultan would at once have a right, by virtue of your occupation of Cyprus, to appeal for the dispatch of the British army and the British fleet, to join him in defending his territories by force of arms.

"I would like Mr. Gladstone, or any other English statesman, to explain how Russia can possibly hold

any other view than that which Prince Lobanoff expressed, namely :—

"'That England is now bound hand and foot to help the Sultan, if Russia moves a single step towards coercion. The occupation of Cyprus was expressly conceded in order to enable you to make necessary provision for executing your engagement to defend the Asiatic frontier of Turkey against Russia, and for no other purpose whatever.

"'This promise has nothing to do with the reforms which the Sultan promised to execute to reward you for having promised to defend him fully, fully and unreservedly, without any conditions whatever, promised to join your armies to his in defending his Asiatic frontier against Russia.

"'And that therefore you are bound by your Treaty obligation to help Turkey against Russia as long as you remain in occupation of Cyprus, whatever may be the failure of the Sultan to execute reforms.'

"I confess frankly that if it were not for this obstacle of the Cyprus Convention, which explains much, I could not say that Prince Lobanoff's reserve in the Turkish massacres would particularly delight us Slavophiles. It was too much like Lord Beaconsfield's attitude in 1876. And I confess also, that there was great humour in Prince Lobanoff's Memorandum, where he appealed, *à la* Disraeli, to the sacredness of the Article IX. of the Treaty of Paris as an 'infringement of the principles of European public law.'

"What solemn coxcombry this would be, if it had not been intended to bring home, in the most sarcastic fashion, to Lord Salisbury, the hateful nature of England's traditional policy in the East. Before

the Treaty of Paris we exercised a direct interference in the affairs of Turkey. After that Treaty we exercised it in concert with the others, but we always asserted it.

"Interference to protect the Christians has been Russia's speciality for centuries; but this may have seemed a good opportunity of demonstrating to England what her traditional policy is, and how it works out in bloodshed and outrage. Let us hope that the last terrible events may lead the English Foreign Office to abandon once for all its pro-Turkish policy."

CHAPTER XIX.

The Pioneer of The Hague Conference.

THE rôle of Madame Novikoff from first to last has been to endeavour to promote alike in peace and in war an entente between Russia and England.

She pursued this object not from any sentimental reasons, but because she had been roused by the death of her brother to a keen appreciation of the miseries entailed upon mankind by the lack of good relations between her country and our own. She realised thirty years ago that there was no hope of any amelioration of the lot of the Eastern Slavs except by the co-operation of Russia and England. She saw that an entente between St. Petersburg and London would give peace to Asia. In the storm and stress of the war in the Balkan and of the war in Afghanistan, she had pleaded for the Anglo-Russian Alliance as the one and only means of avoiding similar disasters in the future. She was now about to apply the same doctrine in a new and wider field. The antagonism, the entirely mischievous and utterly unnecessary antagonism between the Governments of Russia and England not merely postponed the liberation of the Eastern Christians from the Turkish yoke, not merely did it fill Asia from Port Arthur to Bombay with unrest and menace of war, this same antagonism was the one chief outstanding cause of the bloated armaments of Europe.

Twenty years ago we armed against Russia as we are now arming against Germany, and as in former times we armed against France. An Anglo-Russian Entente would then have done almost as much to arrest the ruinous competition in armaments as an Anglo-German Entente would do to-day

At the beginning of 1894 there had been a welcome lull in the Anglo-Russian polemic. The world was, temporarily, at peace. In a few months the Chino-Japanese war began a new and bloody chapter in the history of the human race. But for the moment the gates of the temple of Janus were shut and the hopes of mankind began to revive. It was under these circumstances that Madame Novikoff, acting on this occasion as the avant-coureur of the Tsar, took the initiative of proposing in the English Press the desirability of an international agreement for the arrest of armaments. Madame Novikoff had been confidentially informed that her Emperor Alexander the Third was giving his most serious attention to the subject of how to reduce the intolerable burden of military expenditure, and that he desired nothing so much as to take action if the other Powers would second his initiative. By way of an attempt to ascertain the drift of public opinion, Madame Novikoff published an appeal, which was a kind of pilot balloon for the Rescript of Nicholas II.

It was not for the first time that Russia and England had been engaged in discussing this question. If in 1894 it was a Russian who appealed to the British, eighty years earlier it was a Briton who first brought the question before Russia.

The first monarch to bring the matter before the Powers of Europe was the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV. of England, who, after the Congress of

NICHOLAS II.
Emperor of Russia.

Vienna, proposed that an International Conference should be held, composed of military men, invested with full power by the Great Powers of Europe to decide what should be the normal peace footing of the armies of each Power. The Russian Government supported the idea with enthusiasm. Prince Metternich also accepted it on behalf of Austria. It was decided that the question could be dealt with at a subsequent Conference, which was never held. Thus in 1816 Lord Castlereagh had anticipated the action suggested by Madame Novikoff in 1894. In both cases the response was sympathetic, but, alas, in both cases good intentions failed to materialise in fact.

The second monarch to moot the question of holding an International Conference for the discussion of the question of armaments, was Napoleon III., whose overtures in 1870 were rejected by Prussia and Austria. The third sovereign to raise the subject was the German Emperor William II., in 1893.

His attention had been called to the subject two years earlier by Lord Salisbury, who suggested to Emperor William II. that in view of the fact that in the six years ending 1888 seven European Powers had had to raise close upon a thousand million pounds sterling for naval and military expenditure, it would be well if something could be done to abate the plague. The Kaiser was much taken with the idea and contemplated calling a European Congress to consider practical measures for securing universal peace.

The subject was discussed in the German Press, but the French response was so hostile that the subject was dropped. It was, however, still present to the Emperor's mind, and when he visited Rome in 1893 he spoke on the subject to the Pope. According to a letter written by M. Crispi on July 6, 1893, published

by the *Deutsche Revue* of September 1907, the Kaiser at his famous interview with Leo XIII. at the Vatican, April 23, 1893, proposed to the Pope that a European Congress should be summoned to discusss the question of disarmament. The Pope, remarked M. Crispi, with malice "approved the idea, not because he believed anything could be done, but because the question of disarmament might lead to an international conflict, from which he might profit."

The Kaiser had had his thoughts turned to international disarmament by the refusal of the Reichstag to add 83,894 more men to the German army. A fortnight after the conversation in the Vatican the Reichstag was dissolved, and no more was heard of the proposed Conference.

The Tsar Alexander III., well known for his wholehearted detestation of war, was the next to take the subject into his consideration. The first-fruit of his deliberation was the publication of an article in the early months of 1894, in which Madame Novikoff expressed a very strong opinion that the Tsar wished to make a movement in the direction of disarmament. She said :—

"Although I am the daughter of a man who earned his St. George's Cross on a battlefield, the sister of two soldiers, and the wife of another, I was always dreaming of peace; and even now I personally believe firmly that Russia, with her remarkably pacific Emperor, would willingly consent to a general disarmament, if that grand move were simultaneously taken by all the Great Powers.

"If I were arguing the subject now I might have quoted a great French writer and statesman, Jules Simon. He proposes that all civilised nations should

pledge themselves not to enforce military service for more than a year upon any of their recruits.

"Jules Simon adds: 'The friends of peace must never rest until this military reform is carried. It will immensely reduce the military burden of Europe, under whch it is staggering towards bankruptcy.

"'In diminishing the military force by one-half, or by two-thirds, it would practically reduce the standing armies of Europe to a militia, powerful for defence, weak for offence. *Defence, not defiance,* would then become the motto for all.'

"Of course the difficulty is to get a splendid measure like this carried *simultaneously by all the Great Powers*. But Russia, whose military character certainly cannot be questioned, would, I feel sure, be ready to support what Kinglake derided as 'the Quaker's view.' There is real power in self-control, and in keeping the peace."

The response to Madame Novikoff's appeal was immediate. The first public initiative in London was taken by the Representatives of the Free Churches, who invited Madame Novikoff to attend a Conference on the subject at the Friends' Meeting-Place, Devonshire House, on April 17, 1894. At this Conference a strong desire was expressed that the British Government should take the initiative in appealing to the other Powers for concerted action. The text of the Memorial, which was subsequently signed by 35,000 persons, including eighty members of Parliament and six bishops, and presented to the Government, is a curious foreshadowing of the Rescript of 1898:—

"The continuous and unchecked growth of European armaments has now reached a point which necessitates some concerted action to secure relief.

The pressure of military and naval expenditure threatens States with bankruptcy, cripples the industries and impoverishes the homes of the people, and diverts to wasteful preparation for slaughter funds that would otherwise be available for purposes of social amelioration and reform.

"This ruinous rivalry in armaments is the inevitable, although deplorable, result of the absence of any international understanding. It can only be arrested by an international agreement.

"We would, therefore, respectfully but earnestly suggest that communications should be opened with the European Powers, in order to ascertain whether it may not be possible as a first step towards arresting the further growth of national armaments, and reducing burdens already almost intolerable, to secure a common and general agreement that until the close of the century no State will sanction any increase of its military and naval expenditure beyond the maximum of the estimates of the present year."

Madame Novikoff did not speak at the Conference, but in the next number of *The Review of Reviews* I published an article inspired by her, setting out for the first time the famous Standstill proposition which Russia subsequently brought forward unsuccessfully at The Hague Conference of 1899.

"The question of the hour"—I am quoting from *The Review of Reviews* of May 15, 1894—"is not that of peace or war, but of preparation for peace. Hitherto we have heard plenty of preparation for war. It is time that the nations began to make preparations for peace. In other words, has the time not come when the people collectively could take a stand against the steady increase of the cost

of armaments ? Six years still remain to the present century. Why should the Powers not agree among themselves not to allow their military and naval budgets to pass beyond the present limits ? No one can complain that they are inadequate. Europe is annually paying many millions more than sufficed five years ago. Why could we not agree that the present limit should be regarded as a maximum beyond which no Power should go ? All other questions sink into comparative insignificance compared with this immense problem of checking the automatic growth of the cost of the armies and navies of Europe. The whole social question is bound up in it. Were it possible for the Great Powers not merely to agree to arrest the growth of their military and naval expenditure, but to reduce it all round, say by ten or twenty per cent., there would be liberated a fund available for the purposes of social improvement which would in the course of a few years transform the whole social position. At present everything is blocked because there is no cash. Ministers and Emperors are at their wits' end endeavouring to choke the deficit that yawns on every side. All schemes of social improvement which require money for their success—and every scheme requires money—are checked because of the tribute which the War god levies upon the exchequers of the world. If once the idea were to obtain hold of the popular mind of Europe that a maximum had been reached, and that all efforts should be concentrated upon a reduction of warlike expenditure, a fund might be secured with which much might be done. Of course, nothing can be done excepting by agreement with other Powers, but in concert with other Powers everything may be done. It is good and

well to know that in the present administration we have a Government that is only too anxious to take the initiative in such a direction. It is understood that the Tsar is earnestly desirous of moving in this direction as soon as the opportunity offers. The Kaiser and the Austrian Emperor are said to be of the same way of thinking. For Italy the question of the reduction of armaments is almost a question of life and death, and France alone is the doubtful element. At the same time, there is no person in Europe excepting the Tsar who can bring pressure to bear so effectively on France. Judging from the energetic propaganda in favour of disarmament that is undertaken by the *Novoe Vremya*, there is little fear that the Tsar will shrink from action so characteristic of the peace-keeper of Europe."

While this National Memorial was still in course of signature, Lord Rosebery, then Prime Minister, sent for M. de Staal, and asked him if it was true what Madame Novikoff had stated as to the mood of the Russian Government. M. de Staal replied, with the frank simplicity which gave so great a charm to his character, that if Madame Novikoff said so it was probably true, for she often was informed of what the Russian Government was thinking of doing. "Whereas," said the old Ambassador, "they never tell me anything until they have definitely decided upon doing it."

Thereupon Lord Rosebery took the initiative of suggesting to the Government of St. Petersburg that a Conference should be summoned on the initiative of the Tsar for the purpose of studying the arrest of the increase of armaments. The Government of Russia received the proposition very cordially, but

regretted that the moment was hardly opportune. What rendered it inopportune was the outbreak of war between China and Japan. When the Arbitration Alliance wished to send a deputation to present the National Memorial to the British Foreign Minister in August, he (Lord Kimberley) refused to receive a deputation, on the grounds that the moment was not propitious. There the subject dropped.

The war between China and Japan broke out in July 1894. In 1896 the Inter-parliamentary Conference met in Buda-Pesth. The subject of a limitation of armaments was brought forward and discussed. Among the auditors was the late M. Basili, afterwards the Chief of the Asiatic Department in the Russian Foreign Office. He was much impressed by what he heard, and sent to St. Petersburg a Memorial, pressing his Government to act. Nothing was done, however, in that year. On November 9, 1897, Lord Salisbury, then Prime Minister, made a very strong speech concerning the rivalry in armaments. Speaking at the Mansion House on November 9, 1897, after dwelling upon the ever-increasing competition in armaments among the nations, Lord Salisbury said :—

"The one hope that we have to prevent this competition (in armaments) from ending in a terrible effort of mutual destruction, which will be fatal to Christian civilisation—the one hope that we have is that the Powers may gradually be brought together to act together in a friendly spirit on all subjects of difference that may arise, until at last they shall be welded together in some international constitution which shall give to the world, as the result of their great strength, a long spell of unfettered commerce, prosperous trade, and continued peace."

This led M. Basili to renew his effort at St. Petersburg. He was reinforced by M. Bloch, whose famous book on the *War of the Future* created a marked impression on the mind of the Tsar. But, according to Dr. Dillon's statement in the *Daily Telegraph* of June 1907, nothing would have been done had it not occurred to General Kuropatkin in 1898 to propose to M. Witte that Russia, instead of spending millions on artillery, should enter into an agreement with Austria binding both Powers not to change their old guns. M. Witte rejected the limited proposal, but substituted for it an alternative—the proposal that the European Powers should endeavour to arrive at a general agreement to content themselves with purely nominal armaments and fleets solely for purposes of defence. By this means Europe might vie with the United States in prosperity. Militarism — voilà l'ennemi. Count Mouravieff reported this conversation to Nicholas II., who was in a mood well attuned to the suggestion. M. Pobédonestzeff and some older statesmen shook their heads, but the Tsar hated war and all it entailed.

Hence he gladly signed the Rescript of August 24, 1898, which led to the meeting of the first Conference, the text of which I reproduce to show how closely it was in accord with the lines of Madame Novikoff's arguments of four years before.

The Imperial Rescript was made known to the world by a Reuter's telegram dated St. Petersburg, August 27, 1898. The *Official Messenger* published the following :—

"By order of the Tsar, Count Mouravieff, on August 24, handed to all the foreign representatives accredited to the Court of St. Petersburg the following communication :—

" The maintenance of general peace and a possible reduction of the excessive armaments which weigh upon all nations present themselves in the existing condition of the whole world as the ideal towards which the endeavours of all Governments should be directed.

" The humanitarian and magnanimous ideas of His Majesty the Emperor, my august master, have been won over to this view. In the conviction that this lofty aim is in conformity with the most essential interests and the legitimate views of all Powers, the Imperial Government thinks that the present moment would be very favourable to seeking, by means of international discussion, the most effectual means of ensuring to all peoples the benefits of a real and durable peace, and, above all, of putting an end to the progressive development of the present armaments.

" In the course of the last twenty years the longings for a general appeasement have grown especially pronounced in the consciences of civilised nations. The preservation of peace has been put forward as the object of international policy : it is in its name that great States have concluded between themselves powerful alliances ; it is the better to guarantee peace that they have developed in proportions hitherto unprecedented their military forces, and still continue to increase them without shrinking from any sacrifice.

" All these efforts, nevertheless, have not yet been able to bring about the beneficial results of the desire for pacification. The financial charges following an upward march strike at the public prosperity at its very source.

" The intellectual and physical strength of the nations, labour and capital, are for the major part

diverted from their natural application, and unproductively consumed. Hundreds of millions are devoted to acquiring terrible engines of destruction, which, though regarded as the last word of science, are destined to-morrow to lose all value in consequence of some fresh discovery in the same field.

"National culture, economic progress, and the production of wealth are either paralysed or checked in their development. Moreover, in proportion as the armaments of each Power increase, so do they less and less fulfil the object which the Governments have set before themselves.

"The economic crisis, due in great part to the system of armaments *à outrance*, and the continual danger which lies in this massing of war material, are transforming the armed peace of our days into a crushing burden, which the peoples have more and more difficulty in bearing. It appears evident, then, that if this state of things were prolonged it would inevitably lead to the very cataclysm which it is desired to avert, and the horrors of which make every thinking man shudder in advance.

"To put an end to those incessant armaments, and to seek the means of warding off the calamities which are threatening the whole world, such is the supreme duty which is to-day imposed on all States.

"Filled with this idea, His Majesty has been pleased to order me to propose to all the Governments whose representatives are credited to the Imperial Court the meeting of a Conference which would have to occupy itself with this great problem.

"This Conference would be, by the help of God, a happy presage for the century which is about to open. It would converge in one powerful focus the efforts of all the States which are sincere—seeking to

make the great conception of universal peace triumph over the elements of trouble and discord.

"It would, at the same time, cement their agreement by a corporate consecration of the principles of equity and right on which rest the security of states and the welfare of peoples."

The response of public opinion to this appeal was at first so disheartening that by the middle of December the Russian Foreign Office had practically decided to abandon the Conference, substituting for it a series of Commissions to study the subject mentioned in the Rescript. Returning to London from a tour round Europe which I had undertaken to see what support was available for the Imperial proposal, I was dismayed at the general apathy and sceptical indifference of the public. After consulting with some friends, I decided to proclaim a Crusade of Peace. St. James's Hall was placed at my disposal on the afternoon of Peace Sunday, and Dr. Clifford's church on the evening of that day. The representatives of all the Churches were present on the platform. Just before the meeting began, M. Lessar, afterwards Russian Ambassador at Pekin, came to me with a message from the Embassy at Chesham Place. "I hope your meeting will be a success," he said; "because if your Crusade is not taken up to-day, there will be no Conference. Our people at St. Petersburg are so disheartened at the scepticism and indifference with which the Rescript has been received that they are on the point of dropping the Conference. They will break their fall by proposing the appointment of Committees of investigation. But make no mistake. We shall hear no more of the Conference. They have decided to wait and see if you can make any impression. If you succeed, they will

go on with it. But they are very much depressed and everything depends upon your Crusade."

I thanked M. Lessar, who took his place in the hall. I went into the anteroom, where a preliminary prayer-meeting was being held, and repeated M. Lessar's message, and then went on to the platform feeling very intensely the burden of the responsibility that lay upon me.

A Peace Crusade was proclaimed with unanimity and enthusiasm.

The response was immediate, and the result was satisfactory.

The Peace Crusade was preached vigorously in many countries. It was to have culminated in a pilgrimage through Europe of representative crusaders for every land, passing from capital to capital, and ultimately making their way to St. Petersburg. The idea excited great enthusiasm and was eagerly taken up. Unfortunately, the German Government took alarm at the prospect of the visit of an International Company of Crusaders to Berlin. They feared popular excitement and an outbreak of Chauvinistic passions if French Crusaders were to appeal for peace and disarmament in the streets of Berlin. M. Lessar again came to see me to beg of me, in the name of the Russian Government, to abandon the idea of the Pilgrimage. The Tsar would have been delighted to receive the Pilgrimage, but in face of the warning from Berlin that the German Government feared the Pilgrimage would endanger the peace of Europe, he hoped that we would not persevere with the project. In face of such an intimation there was, of course, no alternative but compliance with the Russian demand. Under the circumstances, after such an official warning of the dangers which might follow an attempt to

secure a demonstration in favour of the Peace Conference in countries where the forces of peace are ill-organised and where they are not by any means in command of public opinion, there seemed no alternative. To have persisted in carrying the Pilgrimage round Europe after the plain warning that it might wreck the very Conference which the Pilgrimage was projected to strengthen, would have been criminal and suicidal folly.

But to this day I have never been able to discover how the visit of one hundred Peace Pilgrims to Berlin could have endangered the peace. What is quite clear is that the demonstration which it would have elicited would have strengthened the hands of those who wished the Conference to succeed.

Instead of a European Pilgrimage of Peace, I was dispatched to St. Petersburg to report to the Emperor the popular response to his Rescript. He received me at Tsarkoe Selo, where I found that I had very little to tell him that he did not know already. He had read regularly *War against War*, the organ of the Crusade, and nothing could have been more cordial than his acknowledgments of the efforts that had been made to secure the success of the Conference.

From this point until the meeting of the second Conference Madame Novikoff took no part in the discussion of the question. But just before the second Conference she intervened—this time on the other side.

It will be remembered that Sir Edward Grey at the beginning of 1908 insisted very strongly upon the absolute necessity of raising the question of Armaments before The Hague Conference. I warned him that nothing could be done, that he was running his head against a stone wall. He replied that even if nothing

could be done this time it was indispensable, if we were not to be made the laughing-stock of the world, that we should insist upon having a full-dress debate upon the proposals which the British Government intended to bring forward. Finding him in this heroic mood, I went round Europe to endeavour to secure him what support was possible in his heroic but forlorn hope. By dint of the most urgent representations at Berlin, the German Government so far waived its objections as to consent to allow the question of Armaments to be debated at the Conference, merely reserving to itself the right to abstain from the discussion.

The Russian Government could not, consistently with its loudly expressed professions, object to the discussion of the question of Armaments at The Hague. It was the Tsar who in 1898 had created the first Hague Conference for the express purpose of discussing that question. But a great deal had happened since then. In the war with Japan the Russians had lost their fleet and disorganised their army. To adopt in 1908 the Standstill Proposition which they had brought forward in 1899, would in their opinion have been equivalent to a permanent interdict upon the re-establishment of their normal strength. It was in vain that I pointed out that whatever resolution was arrived at, the right of Russia to restore her forces to their *ante bellum status quo* was certain to be recognised. Madame Novikoff was implacable. This time she did not adopt the course pursued in 1894 of publishing in the Press an exposition of the views of the Russian Government. She adopted a more direct method of appeal.

For many years Madame Novikoff had been in the habit of meeting Sir Henry and Lady Campbell-Bannerman at Marienbad. A friendship had been established long before there seemed any prospect

that Sir Henry would ever find himself at the head of a British Government. His accession to office had made no difference to their relations.

Lady Campbell-Bannerman, always kind and friendly, sometimes indulged in gentle sarcasm. Thus, one day she asked Madame Novikoff why she never came now to lunch with them, as before, without ceremonies ?

" Oh," answered Madame Novikoff, " since you are at Downing Street things have changed. Sir Henry, as Prime Minister, may often be obliged to see ministers and diplomatists."

" And pray," asked again, smiling, Lady Campbell-Bannerman, " since when are you so afraid of Cabinet ministers and diplomatists ? "

Madame Novikoff, fuming in patriotic wrath at what seemed to her a proposal to prevent Russia re-establishing her armed might, wrote as follows to the Prime Minister :—

" 4 Brunswick Place, Regent's Park,
London, *February* 25, 1907.

" Dear Sir Henry,—I am very sorry not to see you and not to be able to ask you a few questions. You are always so frank and true, and one can trust your word so well !

" At all events, let me beg you to explain to me : what advantage is there for England in keeping Russia in her present condition, without fleet or army ? Is it true that that is your programme for The Hague Conference ? England, being an ally of Japan, is naturally always helping the Japs, but where is England's advantage in that policy ?

" Martens can never consent to an anti-Russian demonstration !

"I feel very sore at heart: it is painful to think that England is always ready to wound Russia's feelings.—Yours very sincerely,

"OLGA NOVIKOFF."

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman replied in the following letter, written with his own hand:—

"10 DOWNING STREET,
WHITEHALL, S.W., *February* 27, 1907.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I am exceedingly sorry that you should have been vexed and made anxious on account of some rumour or impressions which are wholly unfounded and grotesque.

"I can only say that I have never heard a word which could justify the idea that we 'wish to keep Russia in her present condition, without fleet or army.'

"Neither among my colleagues who are directly concerned, and who therefore speak seriously and with responsibility, nor among others who have no personal responsibility and are therefore more likely to speak lightly and even recklessly, has any such conception ever been shown to me; on the contrary, they seem to me to be perfectly at one with the declared and sincere policy of the Government, which is to promote in every possible way friendship—and not only 'correct' friendship, but real friendly feeling—with your country. That was our declared policy when in opposition, and it remains. We wish to come to an amicable and mutually fair and just understanding on all points: and it appears to me that M. Isvolsky and Sir A. Nicholson have worked hard for this, and if left to themselves would accomplish it. I hope they will. As to an 'anti-Russian demonstration at The Hague,' I honestly do not know what you mean.

Russia invented The Hague Conference, and her chief topic was the necessity of putting a check on the ruinous race of expenditure. We ardently supported her, and we are of the same mind still. This is not directed against A. or B. or any other country, and it involves no idea so absurd as enforcing retrenchment upon any unwilling Power. But we wish to strengthen the general opinion of Europe in favour of peace, arbitration, and relief from waste on arms.

"We make no hypocritical pretence on this last matter; we do not conceal that our main motive is to serve our own tax-payer, and to spend his money on more useful and profitable objects. But this can be no offence or damage to any of our neighbours.

"I do earnestly hope that if you are beset by any nightmare of a sinister purpose entertained here against your country you will rid yourself of it, for it is an absolute illusion. I saw Mr. Martens twice: once he lunched here, and I am sure he got no evil impression whatever.

"I hope you are keeping well notwithstanding all worries. I have been laid up for a fortnight, but am now free, but have little or no time for anything.—Believe me, with kind regards, very sincerely yours,

"H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN."

The letter did not satisfy Madame Novikoff. But whether as the result of her angry expostulation or from any other cause—probably from a variety of other causes—the British Government dropped the proposal to raise the question of Armaments at The Hague as if it had been a red-hot coal. Despite all the valorous declarations of Sir Edward Grey in the previous year, the British delegates were instructed to refrain not only from making any definite proposals

on the subject of Armaments, but to avoid raising the educational debate without which the Foreign Secretary once thought the Conference would be a farce.

Instead of a serious debate on practical proposals brought forward by a responsible Government, there was arranged the elaborate tragi-comedy of a Seance devoted to the obsequies of the question of Armaments, Sir Edward Fry, the first British Delegate, officiating as the chief mourner. Madame Novikoff's remonstrance may have had nothing to do with this extraordinary volte face on the part of the British Government, but, if it had, I grieve to admit she would have regarded it as a feather in her cap.

CHAPTER XX.

The Fourth War Scare.

THE support given by England to Japan on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War was naturally very distasteful to Madame Novikoff. She did not, however, write much about it. But in January 13, 1904, in reply to a request from the editor of the *Daily Mail,* she contributed to that paper an article entitled "Is Russia Right: the Other Point of View." The paper was not an attempt to discuss the rights and the wrongs of the controversy between Russia and Japan. Madame Novikoff contented herself with indicating some reasons which might well give England pause before definitely casting her lot in with the Japanese. She did not conceal her disappointment:—

"For many years I have striven to prove the usefulness of an entente cordiale between Russia and England.

"At one time I thought that that was not an idle dream; that facts would prove sufficient teachers. But it has turned out that, while spurning Russia, England has allied herself with Japan. It thus remains for me only to say, Chacun à son goût."

She repudiated on the part of Russia any desire to annex Manchuria. But Manchuria commands both the railways by which Russia gained access to the

sea at Vladivostock and Port Arthur; Russia must therefore exercise an influence in that province:—

"As to Korea, I am not aware that any proposals have been made by Russia such as could be regarded as unreasonable either by that country or by Japan, and I have yet to learn that Korean sympathies lean less towards ourselves than towards the alleged authors of the murderous intrigue in the Korean capital which resulted in the death of the Korean Empress."

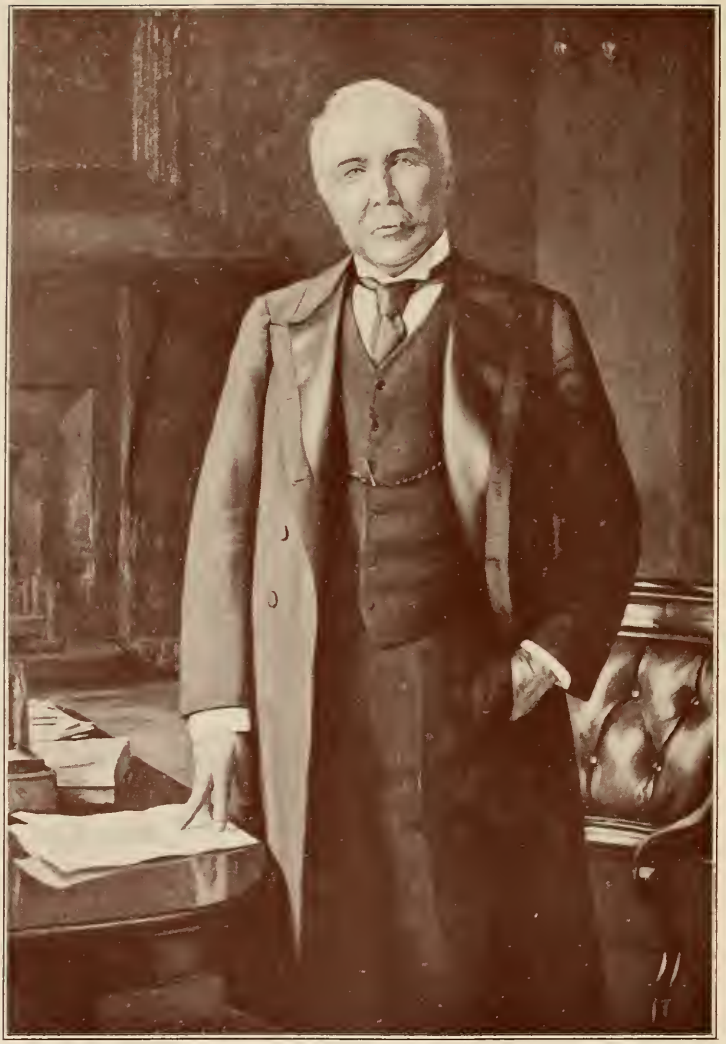
More than this she deemed it unwise to say in the then delicate position of affairs. So she then devoted the rest of her letter to point out some very obvious considerations relating to the commercial and political advantages of a Russian entente over a Japanese alliance. She said:—

"Japan is, I understand, your keenest competitor in the Chinese import trade, which it is straining every effort to monopolise. Its commercial arms are continually stretching in other directions where you are interested.

"Why, then, the English should expect more trade benefit at the hands of Japan than at those of Russia I, in my business ignorance, fail to perceive."

But more important than trade is Empire, and then she touches lightly upon the possible consequences of a Japanese victory:—

"If in the lamentable event of war Japan were to be ultimately victorious; that it continued its present efforts to regenerate China, to organise a splendid fighting material of that country, to supply it with modern armaments, and then to beat down the barrier so long opposed by Russia to Mongol



SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.
British Prime Minister, 1906–1908.

encroachment, would that be for the benefit of the Western World ?

" The alternatives of Russian or of Japanese ascendancy may, in the English view, be a choice of evils. This amuses me. But, if so, would it not be best to choose the lesser evil of the two ? If English territory be not contiguous to that of a yellow Empire as (for thousands of miles) is ours, she has colonies not very far removed from possible attack, and her Indian Empire is, perhaps, more vulnerable from the East than from the West. If she derides the possibility of such dangers, I have reason to believe that she will be wrong."

These considerations, however, fell upon deaf ears as far as the nation at large is concerned. It was reserved for a special correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, Mr. F. A. M'Kenzie, to declare, three years after the war, the justice of Madame Novikoff's prognostications.

Madame Novikoff received many letters from distinguished Englishmen thanking her for the article. Among others who wrote to her was Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Sir Henry, dating from the Lord Warden Hotel, Dover, January 16, said :—

" It was a great pleasure for us to hear from you, and it was very kind of you to write. Norwich[1] is astounding to the self-conceited Unionists, and if the remaining elections keep up the same standard we may see great changes.

" Your letter (in the *Daily Mail*) is very useful, especially appearing in such a newspaper. A friend

[1] Norwich election was one of the bye-elections in which a Liberal victory foreshadowed the sweeping majority which two years later made Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman Prime Minister.

of mine told me that he talked over the situation with a leading European financier, and to everything my friend urged or asked on one side or the other the repeated answer was: 'Il n'y aura pas de guerre.' Let us hope so."

Despite the optimism of the "leading European financier," the Japanese began the war by a surprise attack upon the Russian fleet.

For the next twelve months existence was one long misery for patriotic Russians, and Madame Novikoff was silent.

But she was ever on guard, vigilant as ever to say a timely word when opportunity arose in which she might play once more her accustomed rôle of peacemaker between her own country and ours.

I have referred to the four occasions on which in the last fifty years Russia and England were in danger of being involved in war. The first was due to the attempt of Lord Palmerston to intervene in Polish affairs in 1863–64; the second when Lord Beaconsfield threatened Russia with war in 1876; and again in 1878, in connection with the Eastern Question. The third was when Mr. Gladstone, in 1885, threatened Russia with war over the Afghan frontier dispute. In all these previous crises Madame Novikoff had been keenly interested, and in the greatest of all, that from 1876–78, she had played a very important rôle. The fourth collision threatening war took place in November 1904, when the Hull fishing-boats, mistaken in fog for Japanese torpedo-boats by some captains of Rojdestvensky's fleet, were fired upon and sunk on the Dogger Bank.

The fourth crisis was short and sharp. But it

was very severe while it lasted, and if the hot-headed counsels of the Press had been acted upon the Russian Fleet would have been sunk before it reached the Bay of Biscay. Nor was it only newspapers who lost their heads, and advocated a course of action which among other results would have made Germany mistress of the Continent.

Such excesses of popular fury seem so overwhelming while they last, and so incredibly foolish afterwards, that it is well to recall them from time to time, if only to be reminded of the risks which threaten the peace of nations.

The story of the Hull, or Dogger Bank, incident, briefly told, is as follows :—

"On the night of Friday–Saturday, October 21 and 22, the Russian Baltic Fleet, on its way to the seat of war in the Far East, steamed past fifty British trawlers manned by 500 men, who were peacefully engaged in fishing on the Dogger Bank. The first division of the Fleet passed close by the trawlers without taking any notice of them. The second division, consisting of four ironclads, turned their searchlights upon the trawlers. According to the statement of the skipper of the *Moulmein* trawler, the fishermen, by the aid of the lights, 'noticed what they took to be torpedo-boats approaching them. At one time it seemed likely that they would board the *Moulmein*, but they did not do so, and steamed away.' Then the Russian ships opened fire with their quick-firing guns. In the course of twenty minutes they fired about 300 shots. They hit some half-dozen trawlers. One (the *Crane*) was sunk, four others were seriously damaged. Two fishermen were killed and six injured, all on the *Crane*. No other casualty

occurred. After sinking the *Crane* the Russian Fleet steamed off southward."

That was the incident which, with all its gruesome details, was flashed across the wires to the newspaper offices of London on Sunday, October 23.

The whole affair was ultimately referred to a Commission d'Enquête, which sat in Paris. It was proved conclusively that the incident was due to a mistake, for which the Russians apologised and paid. It was not difficult to see how the mistake arose.

The Russians believed that in dealing with Japan they were contending with an enemy absolutely indifferent to the ordinary obligations of civilised warfare. The attack upon the Fleet at Port Arthur, when there had been no declaration of war, the sinking of their vessel at Chemulpo, and other incidents of naval warfare in the Far East, made the Russians anticipate that their vigilant and ruthless foes would seize the opportunity of attacking them before they could emerge from the narrow seas. They were naturally on the alert against surprises, and in the circumstances, the officers of a raw fleet manned by a scratch crew were certain to be nervously anxious to forestall any attack from their ubiquitous foe.

For a whole week the air rang with fierce denunciations of Russia and the Russians. The newspapers almost with one accord accused the Russian Government of being reluctant to recognise the need for an apology and compensation, and of purposely delaying any answer to the representations of our Government. There was not a scintilla of truth in these assertions, but none the less, being constantly repeated, they brought the country into a dangerous state of bellicose excitement. That there was absolutely no justifica-

tion for all this infernal charivari and beating of the journalistic tom-toms was proved by the Prime Minister, who, after allowing it to go on unchecked, at last deigned at the end of the week to make the following explicit statements :—

" 1. That the four things that the British Government asked were ' gladly and willingly granted by the Tsar.'

"2. That as soon as the tragedy was known, ' without delay ' the Russian Government expressed deep regret, promised ample compensation, and, ' even at the beginning,' undertook that the wrong-doers should be punished.

" 3. That it is but bare justice to the Government of Russia to say that they have not at any time underrated the gravity of the crisis, or failed to do what they could to diminish it.

" 4. That he and his colleagues ' gladly grant ' that, while they have done all they could to avert war, ' we have been met in a like spirit by the Russian Government.'

" 5. That the Russian Government had done ' what, I believe, the British Government would have done ' in a similar position."

These declarations, precise, categorical, and decisive, cut up by the root the whole hypothesis born of panic and passion, and nurtured on intemperance and falsehood, by which the Press did its best or worst to involve the two Empires in war.

For weeks after this emphatic statement by Mr. Balfour, the groundswell of the tempest was only too plainly perceptible. Madame Novikoff, true to her accustomed rôle, refrained from saying anything until the moment arrived when she could speak with effect.

The opportunity came at last, and in an interview and in a letter to the *Westminster Gazette* she spoke a word in season.

The interviewer asked her what she thought of the English " after having had the opportunity of observing our people at close quarters during one of their periodical frenzies ? "

" I am a visitor," said Madame Novikoff, " enjoying the hospitality of your country, and it is not for me to express an opinion concerning the manners of my host. The English have always been very kind to me, and when you can say nothing that is not very complimentary it is as well that you should say nothing at all."

" *' Nil nisi bonum '* is a good maxim, but is it all *nil* and no *bonum* on this occasion ? "

" Lord Lansdowne has been very good," she replied, " and I am very glad indeed to recognise that you have at the Foreign Office a statesman who knows his own mind, and is not flurried by the worryings of your newspapers."

" Now that the incident is past, could you give me the Russian point of view ? "

" It is very simple," said Madame Novikoff. " The Russian point of view is, perhaps, very mistaken, inasmuch as no one is a good judge in his own case, but our standpoint is this : We do not believe that we are a ' nation of lunatics,' nor do we think that our Admirals and our naval officers are either ' criminals ' or ' mad dogs.' That being so, we have never been able to understand how it was possible for any of your people to work themselves up into such a tremendous fury for a blunder which no one regretted so much as the Russians themselves. *Humanum est errare,* and Russians are not arrogant enough to think that they are exempt from the common failing of all fallible

mortals. But to assume, because our blunder, not, perhaps, unnatural under the circumstances, resulted in the unfortunate death of two fishermen and the wounding of more, you were justified in calling my people all manner of bad names—well, that does not seem, to say the least, quite consistent with the sweet reasonableness which Matthew Arnold regarded as the essence of the Christian Faith."

"Yes, but, Madame Novikoff, you forget, when British blood has flowed——"

"On the contrary," she replied, smiling, "it is precisely because we are so well able to put ourselves in your place that we sympathise with you so much. It is not so long ago in China that Russian blood flowed almost in exactly the same proportions as it did on the Dogger Bank—that is, two men were killed and several wounded by British guns, due to a blunder—but we did not call it an outrage, nor did we seize the occasion to incite our people to evil feelings against the British."

Madame Novikoff told the story of that incident in a letter addressed to the *Westminster Gazette* on Nov. 16. It is characteristic of the frenzy of the time that although the letter was freely reprinted abroad, no other English journal deigned to notice it, although nothing more pertinent could be imagined.

The letter was as follows :—

ANOTHER INCIDENT.

"To the Editor of the *Westminster Gazette*.

"SIR,—Allow me to draw your attention to an incident which seems to have been forgotten in England, but which I hope you will find to be of some interest.

"I refer to the year 1900, when joint international

landing forces were sent by railway from Tientsin to Pekin, where the lives of Europeans were threatened by the Boxers.

"About midnight on June 17, a body of our sailors were returning on foot from their work. A detachment of English sailors who were travelling by the said railway, perceiving from their carriages moving figures, and believing these to be Boxers, at once opened fire upon them. The mistake was soon discovered, and the firing was naturally stopped at once, but the mischief was already done. Two men—Schadrin, belonging to the *Navarin*, and Iliakoff, belonging to the *Korniloff*—were killed, and several others were wounded. The British Vice-Admiral Seymour, being in supreme command of the united forces, hastened to send an official letter of regret and apology to the Russian Captain Tchaguine, who was in charge of the men thus so fatally attacked.

"The *Cronstadt Messenger* (No. 127) has printed that important document, which I here reproduce :—

"'SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that I have this moment received news of last night's fatal incident in which some of your men were killed by ours. I hasten to express my greatest regrets, and those of the British forces under my command, for the event, which cannot sufficiently be deplored. I have the honour, Sir, to be your obedient servant,—

"'VICE-ADMIRAL SEYMOUR.'

"Whether these are the *ipsissima verba*, in English, of Admiral Seymour's letter I cannot say. I translate them from the Russian as quoted in the above-mentioned paper.

"Captain Tchaguine then reported the event to the Russian Admiral Hildebrandt, the chief of the

Russian Pacific Squadron, who, though naturally distressed by such startling news, yet, being an officer of great naval experience, understood that such mistakes may easily happen, especially at night. So that when Admiral Seymour called upon him to repeat his regrets, the Russian Admiral accepted them, entirely trusting in their sincerity.

"That British 'outrage' had no further consequences. No warlike agitation was started by the Russian Press; there was no hooting of the British Ambassador, no comparison with 'mad dogs,' no monetary compensation insisted upon. . . .

"On reading the account of this painful event in China, one is struck by certain analogies, as also by certain differences, between what happened in June 1900 and in October 1904. In both cases these deplorable mistakes were committed in the darkness of night, though one occurred on a misty night in October, the other on a summer night in June. In both cases, also, two men were killed and several were wounded. But there were also, as I have observed, differences between the two cases. The British Admiral was able to offer his regrets and excuses at once, whilst Admiral Rojdestvensky learned the regrettable events of October 21 in the North Sea only on the third day after, at Vigo, which thus made him appear careless of most vital duties. The Russian Government asked no compensation, nor did England volunteer the offer of any, for the families of the killed and wounded in 1900. In Russia there was no shouting for war, perfect calm prevailed; whilst in England in 1904 the Press showed, to say the least of it, a lamentable want of patience and consideration.

"In fact, had it not been for the statesmanlike

attitude of Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour (may I be pardoned in saying especially the attitude of Lord Lansdowne), great misery might at this very moment have been spread over two great Christian nations—yes, over the very countries whose interests lie in the opposite direction to that of war. Instead of war, what both our countries ought to recognise as necessary is an honest and staunch entente cordiale.—Yours faithfully,

"OLGA NOVIKOFF (O. K.).

"4 Brunswick Place, Regent's Park,

"*November* 15."

"Yes," said Madame Novikoff to her interviewer, "it is all over now, I hope, and we must begin again once more our efforts to promote the entente between England and Russia which has always been the goal of our endeavours."

"It looks very much like the labour of Sisyphus."

"Never despair in a good cause," said Madame Novikoff; "and, after all, you must remember that our Emperor's initiative in calling the Hague Conference has at least provided means by which one Anglo-Russian misunderstanding is being satisfactorily cleared up. It is a hopeful augury for the future. Who knows but that some similar court or commission may lead to the dissipating of many prejudices which now afford such dangerous weapons to the enemies of peace!"

In a fog nothing is more easy than to make the mistake made by the Russian captain who believed fishing-boats were hostile torpedo-boats, and acted accordingly. On this point Mr. George Wedlam, writing to the *Spectator*, says:—

"The mistake is not unknown in the British navy.

Permit me to refer you to the *Naval Annual* for 1901, p. 115. The writer being that eminent civilian expert on naval affairs, Mr. J. R. Thursfield, who tells us that in the Naval manœuvres of 1900—'The *Minerva*, scouting off the west coast of Ireland, got among the fleet of fishing-boats off the Skelligs on the night of July 27. Mistaking them for torpedo-boats, and remaining among them apparently for some hours, she persuaded herself that she must have been torpedoed, and loyally hoisting the "Blue Peter"—the signal of being out of action—proceeded quickly to Milford, there to await the decision of the umpires. As no torpedo-boats were, nor, under Admiral Dawson's orders, could have been engaged, the decision was naturally given in her favour. But the action of the *Minerva* was remarkable, not to say quixotic. Such an incident could not, of course, happen in war; but even in war, cruisers which mistake fishing-boats for torpedo-boats are likely to meet with strange adventures and to play the enemy's game rather than their own.' The *Minerva* is a twenty-knot cruiser of 5600 tons. And her action was even more extraordinary than that of the Russian Admiral, or whoever was primarily responsible, for the Dogger Bank firing."

Madame Novikoff received many sympathetic letters at this time, of which I only quote one, that from Sir. H. Campbell-Bannerman:—

"*November* 23, 1904.

"Your letter to the *Westminster Gazette* is a very good one, and I only hope that the two episodes, by land and sea, will end in an equally amicable manner. But of course they are no way alike—the first a not unusual incident in an army, the second a mysterious

attack on bystanders. I confess I have not heard, nor can I imagine, any reasonable explanation of it. But, as I said, I hope it will end amicably and have no evil consequences.

"My wife sends her kindest regards, and believe me very truly yours,

"H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN."

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had many good and great qualities both of head and of heart; but, like all men, he had his limitations, and this incapacity of his to understand how Dogger Bank could have occurred reveals one of them. The occurrence, as every one now sees, had not a reasonable but a nervous explanation.

GRAND DUKE ALEXEI NICHOLAIEVITCH (1908).
The Heir Apparent.

CHAPTER XXI.

De Omnibus Rebus

MADAME NOVIKOFF began her correspondence with Mr. Gladstone on the subject of the Old Catholics. With the exception of the letters on the Armenian Question referred to in a previous chapter, her last letters to him related to the same subject.

Her brother, General Alexander Kiréeff, has always been zealous in the cause of the Old Catholics. Professor Michaud, Editor of the *Revue Internationale de Théologie*, was not less ardent in the cause. Her correspondence with the Professor was voluminous and very interesting. The following letter, dated Berne, January 17, 1891, may suffice to show how close were the ties of affectionate sympathy which bound together the three :—

"Your brother writes me that he is having his share of grief, and that your son is unwell. That is enough to affect us and sadden us, and to make us feel the need of telling you so. We are not anxious, for youth has so many resources, especially when all possible means of looking after oneself are at hand, that one need never despair. So, courage! And hope! But it is none the less true that one suffers when one feels those to be in trouble whom one loves and would wish to see well and happy. Alas! We have always a cross to carry, and, little or big, it is always too heavy.

"Think of your good friends, who must be very many, and who sympathise with you in your griefs; and among those friends, if we are the least, we are also among the most sincere and the most ardent, believe me. Here have I known your brother these twenty years, bound to him by what ties of religion, conscience, friendship! ties of the strongest kind, not to be sundered even by death. His being is a part of my own. I could not now live without his thought. And you have allowed me to associate with him yourself. Therefore, think not of us as indifferent to your welfare. Tell me if you have good news, so that we may rejoice with you. My wife and my children think and feel as I do in this matter, and have charged me to tell you so.—Yours sincerely,

"E. MICHAUD."

"I sometimes regret," the Professor wrote to her on one occasion, "that you live more for politics than for science,"—a fault which, in his opinion, she shared with the English people. During the war in South Africa he wrote to her:—

"The English seem to me to be absorbed in their war; they have no longer any time for theology, and they had so little before!"

M. Michaud was as full of compliment to his correspondent as M. Reville. Here are a few of the phrases with which his serious dissertations on ecclesiastical questions were illumined:—

"Were I at the Russian Court I should beg His Majesty to make you Ambassadress. I think that if you had been in the famous European Concert it would have gone better than it did. Too late now!"

"Do your best for this, with your fairy fingers: that will give me the pleasure of reading you soon.

"We were glad to see by your card that your health is satisfactory. If I may be allowed to say so, if you would take up your magic pen again (bonne plume de Tolède), you would be quite well again."

Mr. Gladstone left office in 1894. In January 1893 Madame Novikoff sent him a paper by her brother on the Old Catholic movement, accompanying it by a playful lament that he seemed to have cut her, as she had not seen him for so long. He replied:—

"10 Downing Street,
Whitehall, *January* 24, 1893.

"My dear Madame Novikoff,—I have not yet fulfilled fourteen days in England, days of very hard and difficult work. I am afraid that, according to your construction, I have 'cut' a great many people.

"There is no getting over the fact of eighty-three years; and it entails, I fear, and not for fourteen days only, the non-fulfilment of many personal and social obligations; which I greatly regret, and regard as a serious evil. I thank you very much for your enclosure, and I rejoice in its tone. It is quite right and natural that Russia should, like England, feel an interest in the proceedings of the Old Catholics. I am the more glad of it because I had at one time understood that the suspension of the Bonn Conferences was in some measure connected with the action or non-action of Russia.—I remain always sincerely yours,

"W. E. Gladstone.

"And if my calling is delayed, it will be from my necessity, not my will. Should you wish more copies of my little book on Holy Scripture I will gladly send

them. I send herewith a little book upon Ireland, which pray accept."

In the following year, after he had left office, Madame Novikoff transmitted to him an earnest appeal from Professor Michaud that he would contribute to the *Revue Internationale de Théologie*. Mr. Gladstone declined, but his letters show how kindly courteous he was to the last :—

"HAWARDEN CASTLE,
CHESTER, *October* 6, 1894.

"MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I can hardly ever write anything upon suggestion. What is more is that I have before me continuous operations, long ago planned, and must refrain from those that are fragmentary. So I can undertake nothing new. My interest in the Old Catholics is cordial. A sister of mine died in virtual union with them after having been Roman for over thirty years. I remember suggesting to Dr. Döllinger that their future would probably depend in great measure upon their being able to enter into some kind of solid relations with the Eastern Church. And I earnestly hope this may go forward. Dr. D. agreed in this opinion. They may do great good, and prevent the Latin Church, by moral force, from further extravagances. All this you will think disheartening with reference to the object of your letter. But I have a little more to say. I have been drawn into writing a preface to a Pictorial Edition of the Bible, which will probably have a very wide circulation in America, but will be confined to English Speakers. My Preface will have no reference to that Edition, but to the authority and value of the Scriptures. I think there will be nothing to which *you* or Old Catholics would object. Now *suppose* that the

projectors were willing that my Preface should be translated into French or German, and offered in that form to Dr. Michaud, for his Review exclusively, at or very soon after the time of publication in America and in English. Dr. Michaud might retain his right to commend partial exclusions, should he see cause. If I hear from you that this plan would be acceptable on his side, I will propose it to my correspondents in America. It would in effect be a permission to translate, with copyright of the translation.—Believe me sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE."

"HAWARDEN, *October* 13, 1894.

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I do not think that I have conveyed very clearly to M. Michaud the state of the case: but I quite understand the non-payment, and I will put to my American correspondent the following question in terms:—

"'Will you allow M. Michaud, Editor *Revue Internationale de Théologie*, if on inspection of the "Preface" he shall think fit, to reproduce it, in a French or German translation, to be made by him or under his auspices as soon as possible after the publication of the Preface in America, or at some fixed time when his Review comes forth, say in January next. I look for a proof from you in November; and if you favour my suggestion, you would perhaps let him know at Berne in Switzerland (Rev. M. le Professeur Dr. Michaud)?' I thank you for sending me General Kiréeff's communication, and sincerely hope the limitations of my visual power will not prevent me from reading it. I rejoice that the Old Catholics have so important a friend in the Orthodox Church.

"My recollections of Dr. Döllinger were published in the *Speaker* newspaper, 1891, just after the paper

started, and about three and a half years ago. I wish I had a copy to send you.

"I do not suspect that my 'Preface' will be telegraphed about; and I have no means of knowing what view my American correspondent will take of my suggestion.—Sincerely yours, W. E. GLADSTONE.

"I enclose a draft for five pounds, and should be glad if it is expended in supplying, as long as it lasts, a copy of the *Revue* to the following address: The Warden and Librarian, St. Deiniols, Hawarden, Great Britain."

On the 19th of the same month Mr. Gladstone sent Madame Novikoff a postcard declining to meet some one whom she wished him to meet:—

"As a younger man with eyes and ears, I should have been charmed to add to the circle of my acquaintance, but as I am, and with the clock nearly striking eighty-five for me, I shrink within my shell, and shall not enter into new relations. So I fear you will have to excuse me. It gives me the utmost concern to learn from the newspapers ominous accounts of your Emperor's health.

"My best regards to General Kiréeff, and all good wishes for his work."

The "ominous accounts" to which Mr. Gladstone referred were speedily followed by the news of the death of Alexander III., which took place at Livadia on November 1, 1894.

Mr. Gladstone wrote to her on November 24 as follows:—

"DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,—I thank you for your enclosure, and I assure you that I cordially sympathise

in your feelings about your deceased Emperor. His personal character demands my admiration, and he was politically, I believe, possessed with just ideas about the relations between Russia and England, and both in Europe and in Asia a powerful friend to peace. Nor can I ever forget his personal courtesy and kindness. We in this country much regret that the reign of so excellent a man should have been marked by restrictive measures in religion; but we persuade ourselves of these he was not personally the author.

"The solemnities on his death must have been full of deep interest, and, but for unwillingness to trouble you, I should have written to ask you under what title and in what language I could order a book of the service performed, which I dare say was published. Your new Emperor I have only seen as a boy engaged in a boy's play. May all good attend him in his great and awful charge."

Mr. Gladstone met the "new Emperor" at Copenhagen in the eighties when he was on Donald Currie's steamer making a cruise in northern waters for his health. He told me on his return that he had been much pleased with the lads, who seemed like English public-school boys of the best type.

The last letter to be quoted from Mr. Gladstone on non-political subjects was written from Biarritz on February 6, 1896. Madame Novikoff had sent him a theological treatise by her brother. He wrote :—

"With regard to General Kiréeff's paper, I have not been wholly neglectful, and I have received from a very competent and judicious friend a suggestion which I would submit for careful consideration. It is that, considering the intricacy of the question and

the wide field it covers, the papers should be submitted to some learned orthodox theologian in order to ensure perfect accuracy. It would be a great pity if so strong a case were to be damaged by accidental error of statement. If this suggestion should not be acceptable, I would venture to recommend you to test the work by comparing it with Dr. Talmon's Treatise on the Infallibility, the very able production of a very able man, of whom I know that Dr. Döllinger had a particularly high opinion. In my view, therefore, the question is hardly ripe for immediate settlement, I mean as to publication. I hope you have seen Purcell's *Life of Manning*, a book which ought to be read with great interest by Orthodox theologians."

I have now come almost to the close of my task, and as I glance over the proofs I am filled with compunction at the thought of the reminiscences I have not remembered and of the correspondence which I have left unnoticed. But even more than these do I feel painfully my own shortcomings as I compare the picture I have drawn with the bright and gracious original.

The foregoing narrative may lead some reader to imagine that Madame Novikoff is only a politician and a diplomatist, a grande dame of the salon, and so forth, whereas, while she is all these things, she is primarily and before all else a kind-hearted woman, a devoted mother, and an enthusiastic friend. Of all these things I have said little, but to all who know her they are so prominent her public service seems often to be incidental.

To obtain employment for an old workman, to find engagements for struggling artistes, to cheer the lives of those who are poor, ailing, and approaching

their end—these things always seem to give her more keen enjoyment and satisfaction than the most brilliant of her political and literary triumphs. Her passion for helping lame dogs over difficult stiles is so notorious among her friends, that we almost dread the day on which she discovers some new protégé; for all her old friends are commandeered to aid the latest comer. Happy is the man or woman whom Madame Novikoff deems it her duty to take up.

Nor is it only men and women whose miseries find a quick response in a heart tremulously sensitive to human suffering. I remember how startled I was, when driving in the early days through the streets of London to the railway station, to hear a sudden cry of pain and an instant summons to the driver to stop. Madame Novikoff had seen a man strike a boy on the pavement. It was all I could do to restrain her from interposing to rescue the lad from his tormentor. She was just as quick to protest against brutality to animals. One Max, a dog which she rescued from the lethal chamber, survives to this day a petted and pampered favourite, who seems to think that her home is exclusively his own.

I have said little about Madame Novikoff's friendships for women, which, although not so numerous, have always been as close and as lasting as her friendships with men. Miss Pauline Irby, who did such good work in Bosnia, was devoted to her. The Countess Alexei Tolstoy, one of the most cultivated women in Russian society, was her friend to the last. Mary Kingsley was enthusiastic about Madame Novikoff, and no one mourned her premature death more sincerely than Madame Novikoff. George Eliot she knew, but not intimately. The names of Countess Ignatieff, Countess Olga Tornielli, Madame Hitrovo, Madame Adam, Miss

Julia Wedgwood, Madame Alexandra Narischkine, and many other distinguished women, rise up before me as I write. But they were not good correspondents. Their friendship was personal rather than political, and so but little can be said of many friendships which counted for very much more in her life than that of many of those who figure conspicuously in this narrative.

One distinguishing characteristic of Madame Novikoff must have impressed even the most cursory reader—that is the extraordinary tenacity of her friendships. Only death seems to have been able to sever the affectionate intimacies which she formed. Age made no difference on either side. She was famous for the charm with which she seemed to attract the elderly statesmen and diplomatists of our time. It used to be a standing joke that most of the men who formed her court were old enough to be her father. But whether it was old men or young men, they never tired of her acquaintance. To differences of rank or station she was absolutely colour blind. Poor or rich, to her it has always been the same. But the aristocracy of intellect has always attracted her, and she has often instinctively divined the moral superiority of people who at the time had not been recognised at their real value. Nothing jars upon her nerves more than mediocrities, a failing which sometimes finds impatient expression.

Madame Novikoff has achieved whatever success may be reckoned to her credit on modest means. She is not a millionaire by any means, but she seems always satisfied with what she has. The two schools founded by her son in the Government of Tamboff are very precious to her, and often need help. Madame Novikoff has gone on her pacific warfare at her own

charges. What wealthy and titled women have tried in vain to do, although they have endless resources at their command, Madame Novikoff has achieved single-handed by mother-wit and personal charm.

It would be difficult to analyse the secret of that charm. In her earlier years she sang with exceptional power and expression, but she preferred to sing for the afflicted inmates of Bethlem Hospital rather than in Society. Her extreme amiability, her ready sympathy, her quick intelligence, the wide range of her interests, her capacity for listening, her extraordinary passion for helping her friends to achieve whatever object they pursued, were the chief ingredients in the spell which for nearly half a century she has cast upon the foremost men and women in Europe.

She has survived most of those whose correspondence is quoted in this book, and many others whose letters have been passed over. Among the latter I ought to mention Dr. Church, the saintly Dean of St. Paul's, who was as friendly as Canon Liddon; Sir William Harcourt, who was occasionally to be met in her salon. Sir James Stansfeld recognised in the Kiréeffs the same vein of enthusiasm for nationality and the same passion of self-sacrifice which had fascinated him in earlier years in Mazzini and the heroes of the Italian revolution. Dr. Döllinger, Professor Frohschammer, and many another famous polemic of last century have long since passed away, but their memory is still vivid in the mind of their sympathetic admirer.

There are still some survivors left of the early days before the Eastern Question rose to call forth her latent energies. Professor Alois Riehl, from whose letters I ought to have made some extracts, is still alive.

So too, until these pages were being passed for the press, was another tried and honoured old friend, Dr. D. W. Simon, formerly Principal of the Congregational Colleges at Birmingham and Bradford. She met him at Marienbad in the early seventies, and to the last when they met they found as much delight as ever in discussing the religious and metaphysical problems which had absorbed Dr. Simon from his youth up.[1] Lord Courtney has dropped out of the familiar circle of late years ; but Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace keeps up the acquaintance begun in Russia in the early seventies. Of members of the present Ministry I have heard her express a great admiration for Mr. Haldane and great sympathy with Mr. Herbert Gladstone.

Madame Novikoff, as I have always been proud to repeat, began her contributions to the Press in the *Northern Echo*. I was her first editor. She has contributed since then to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, before it was bought by the Philistines, the *Daily News*, the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Times*, the *Observer*, and the *Daily Mail*. Articles by her have been published by the *Nineteenth Century*, the *Contemporary Review*, the *Fortnightly Review*, the *Review of Reviews*, the *New Review*, *Fraser's Magazine*, and at least one of the quarterlies. On the Continent she has contributed to the *Nouvelle Revue*, the *Flandre Liberale*, and other papers. In Russia her contributions have appeared in the *Moscow Gazette*, the *Novoe Vremya*, the *Russ*, the *Contemporary News*, and the *Svet*.

It may be noted that in these reminiscences I have seldom alluded to the Royal and Imperial personages about whom many interesting facts might have been recorded. But this is not a book of gossip

[1] Dr. Simon died while this work was passing through the press.—W. T. S.

about Kings and Emperors, nor even about Empresses and Grand Duchesses.

Such exalted personages have time and again been very kind to Madame Novikoff, but audiences are not interviews.

I must, however, permit myself to quote one remark made by Madame Novikoff about the little boy who is heir to the Russian throne, of whom a prediction is repeated that he will combine the qualities of Alexander the Second with the resolute will of Peter the Great.

Last July, when I was in St. Petersburg, Madame Novikoff said :—

"I saw the little Tsarewitch at Peterhof to-day. He had been gathering mushrooms, and had a basketful in his hand, which he proudly brought to his mother, but also showed to me. A more charming child, so bright, so attractive, I never saw."

CHAPTER XXII.

Finis Coronat Opus.

IN the preceding chapters I have attempted to describe, supplementing personal reminiscences with copious reference to contemporary correspondence, thirty years of the social and diplomatic journalistic and political activity of the lady whom Lord Beaconsfield described as the Member for Russia.

There is a singular appropriateness about the appearance of this record at the beginning of the New Year after that which witnessed the meeting of the sovereigns of the British and Russian Empires at Reval. For that reunion proclaimed, as with a feu-de-joie audible all round the world, the accomplishment of the great object for which Madame Novikoff has worked so hard. To have produced these Reminiscences before the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention would have been premature. Even after the signature of that Convention it would have been injudicious, until the meeting of the King and Tsar had advertised to the world the significance of the new Entente.

On June 9, 1908, the Emperor of Russia and the King of England dined together as a family party on board the Imperial yacht *Standard* in the harbour of Reval. It was the culminating point of a great international reunion. In two brief speeches the Royal and Imperial spokesmen of Russia and England proclaimed

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF IN HER LIBRARY, 4 BRUNSWICK PLACE, REGENT'S PARK, LONDON (1906).

in the hearing of the whole world that England and Russia were henceforth friends, not foes.

The Tsar said :—

"It is with feelings of the deepest satisfaction and pleasure that I welcome Your Majesty and Her Majesty the Queen to Russian waters. I trust that this meeting, while strengthening the many and strong ties which unite our houses, will have the happy result of drawing our countries closer together, and of promoting and maintaining the peace of the world. In the course of the past year several questions, of equal moment both to Russia and to England, have been satisfactorily settled by our Governments. I am certain that Your Majesty appreciates as highly as I do the value of these agreements, for, notwithstanding their limited scope, they cannot but help to spread among our two countries feelings of mutual goodwill and confidence. I drink to the health of Your Majesty, and of the Queen, and to the prosperity of the Royal Family, and of the British nation."

King Edward's reply was as follows :—

"I thank Your Majesty most heartily on behalf of the Queen and myself for the cordial manner in which you have welcomed us in the waters of the Baltic, and for the affectionate words in which you have proposed our healths. I have the happiest recollections of the welcome which I received on the occasion of my previous visits to Russia at the hands of your illustrious grandfather, your beloved father, and yourself, and it is a source of the sincerest gratification to me to have this opportunity of meeting Your Majesties again. I most heartily endorse every word that fell from Your Majesty's lips with regard to the

Convention recently concluded between our two Governments. I believe it will serve to knit more closely the bonds which unite the peoples of our two countries, and I am certain that it will conduce to the satisfactory settlement in an amiable manner of some momentous questions in the future. I am convinced that it will not only tend to draw our two countries more closely together, but will help very greatly towards the maintenance of the general peace of the world. I hope this meeting may be followed before long by another opportunity of meeting Your Majesties. I drink to the health of Your Majesties, to that of the Empress Marie Feodorovna, and the members of the Imperial family, and, above all, to the welfare and prosperity of your great Empire."

A few hours before the reality of this Entente had been emphasised by King Edward's action in appointing the Emperor Nicholas an Admiral of the British Fleet. Nothing could have been more simple, more natural, more significant. Luncheon was just ending when King Edward, taking a slip of paper from his pocket, pencilled upon it a few words, and threw it across the table to the Tsar. Nicholas picked it up, read it curiously, and then, flushing with pleasure, he expressed his thanks to his royal kinsman. On the paper the words were written, "I appoint you Admiral of the British Fleet." Immediately after lunch, the Emperor, attended by Count Heyden and Admiral Niloff, proceeded on board the *Minotaur*, where he was received with an Admiral's salute. The flag of an Admiral of the Fleet was run up to the mast-head. His Majesty inspected the guard of honour, and conversed with the captain and officers.

After this public, although informal, demonstration

of the Anglo-Russian Entente, it is possible to deal with the story as a completed whole from its first tremulous beginnings in 1876 to its crowning triumph in 1908.

In the great work of bringing together the nations estranged by the wars of generations, and the even more irritating friction of hostile and jealous diplomacies, many forces have co-operated. No one, least of all Madame Novikoff, would claim to have been more than a humble worker in the host of those who have laboured together to bring about this happy result. But of her it may be said, that to no other person in either nation has it been vouchsafed to labour so continuously in both countries for the attainment of the Anglo-Russian Entente. Ambassadors like M. de Staal and Sir Robert Morier have laboured zealously for years in St. Petersburg and in London. Three Russian Emperors in succession have publicly and privately sought to bring about a better understanding with this country. Statesmen like M. de Giers and Mr. Gladstone have done their best. But for them the improvement of the relations between England and Russia was but one of the many preoccupations of busy lives. To none of them was it permitted to witness the realisation of their ideal. Madame Novikoff in that respect was more fortunate than the three peace-loving Emperors. Her position is unique. And it is no small satisfaction to me to have an opportunity of doing tardy justice to one of the most remarkable personalities of our time.

Thirty-two years ago no enterprise could have seemed more hopelessly quixotic than that of establishing an entente cordiale between Russia and England. Madame Novikoff was driven to undertake that forforn hope by the imperious compulsion of a great

sorrow. The death of her heroic brother, Nicholas Kiréeff, due directly to the antagonism between Russia and England, threatened to intensify that antagonism, and to plunge the two nations into war. Out of the nettle Danger she plucked the flower Safety, and, as if by inspiration, made what at first menaced war a bond of sympathy which ensured peace.

Nothing seemed more likely to precipitate war with England than the presence of Russian Volunteers in Servia. Nothing so effectively averted that danger as the demonstration that the Volunteer movement was a spontaneous national outburst of humanitarian and religious enthusiasm which the Russian official world regarded with alarm and dislike. It was Madame Novikoff more than any other who interpreted to the popular masses in Britain the true inwardness of the Russian Volunteers. As the sister of the first distinguished Volunteer who sealed with his blood his devotion to the cause, she could speak with authority; while the sympathy inspired by the memory of her own bereavement secured her a respectful hearing, for which any other Russian, whether Emperor or Ambassador, would have appealed in vain.

From the day that she received the news of her brother's death, down to the day when the late Prime Minister dined out for the last time, at her table, Madame Novikoff devoted herself to the realisation of her great ideal. "If Russia and England had not been at variance, then had my brother not died," was the thought that spurred her into action. As the years passed, there deepened in her the sense of the world-wide importance of healing the breach between Muscovite and Briton. Year in, year out, in London and in Moscow, in English periodicals and in Russian

newspapers, in Society and out of it, Madame Novikoff pursued with unfaltering, although often with impatient, spirit, the ever elusive Entente. Three times in these thirty years Russia and England were within perilous proximity of war, but at each crisis Madame Novikoff, either directly or indirectly, hastened to put herself between the angry combatants, adjuring them to keep the peace. And during all the other years when there was less imminent prospect of bloody war, but when the policy of pin-pricks was in full swing, she laboured not less assiduously to allay irritation, to remove misunderstandings, and to promote good relations. What others of the same way of thinking undertook occasionally, in the intervals of other occupations, she made the business of her life.

It may be said that Madame Novikoff often irritated those whom she sought to conciliate, and that in her uncompromising championship of Russia she provoked antagonism and intensified animosity. No doubt there is some truth in this. But that was in great measure the secret of her strength. The great service which she rendered was to be the M.P. for Russia—to represent faithfully her country and her countrymen in London. That she did, and she did it all the more effectively because of her transparent and sometimes reckless honesty and frankness. The Russian diplomatist had come to be a byword for guile. This Russian diplomatist—unofficial, unaccredited—did at least free herself from the very first from all suspicion of double-dealing. She spoke her mind with the most refreshing frankness, piercing Kings and Queens and Emperors with her sarcasm, affronting the most sacred prejudices of our solemn Pharisees, and generally acting the part rather of an enfant terrible than of the astute, calculating, un-

scrupulous Muscovite diplomatist. And yet, as she did it all in such good humour and with such excellent motives, she disarmed criticism and attracted even those whom she repelled. She was Russia incarnate in Claridge's Hotel.

Madame Novikoff, the god-daughter of an Emperor, the sister-in-law of an Ambassador, the sister of soldiers, was by birth and education well fitted to interpret to the British people the ideas of the governing classes in the Russian Empire. But her great service was rather in the interpreting of those popular and obscure, but more universal, sympathies which animate the hundred millions of Muscovy. She was the friend of Aksakoff rather than the mouthpiece of Gortschakoff. She was a Slavophile, faithful to the triple watchword Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality; anti-Turk alike by temperament, by training, and by religion. In the early days when she began her work, she saw her book, *Russia and England*, placed in the official index of the Russian censorship, because of her keen plea for the establishment of a representative assembly in Moscow for consultative purposes. She has lived to see not a Zemski Sobor but a Douma, and to be denounced as a reactionary by the sons of those who thirty years ago wondered why so audacious a critic of Russian policy should be allowed to go scot-free.

An ingenious American professor of Clark University is reported to have proclaimed to his countrymen as an epoch-making discovery that every woman has two souls, the latest scientific formula for the old tag, *Varium et mutabile semper femina*. It was Madame Novikoff's task alike in Russia and in England to proclaim a similar truth about nations. Russia and England have each two souls, and no better service

was rendered to either than by reminding each of the existence of the other. In London, Madame Novikoff insisted upon the difference between official and unofficial Russia—the Russia of Moscow and the Russia of St. Petersburg. In Russia she insisted with not less persistence and conviction upon the existence of two Englands—the England of Mr. Gladstone and the England of Lord Beaconsfield. Between the Russia of St. Petersburg and the England of Lord Beaconsfield there was antagonism and antipathy; between the England of Mr. Gladstone and the Russia of Moscow there was mutual understanding and mutual sympathy. And as the dislike and distrust with which the England of Mr. Gladstone regarded the England of Lord Beaconsfield was almost as great as that with which the latter was regarded by the Russia of Moscow, Madame Novikoff's task was not so impossible as it might have appeared at first sight. For mutual antipathy is often an even stronger bond than mutual sympathy.

The doctrine of the disassociation of personalities is much in favour with the modern school of psychical research. It is dangerous, involving as it does a break-up of the unity of the individual, but it conduces to charity and understanding. To break up an apparently intractable substance into elements with some of which it is possible to deal is a great step in the laboratory both of nations and of chemists. So long as Russia was regarded as a homogeneous unity in England, and England was regarded as equally one and indivisible, the work of mutual rapprochement was barred by invincible prejudices. But the task of analytical disintegration which enabled Russian and Briton to discriminate between what was universal and particular, between the evil which they debited

to a class and the good qualities which were essential to the nation, converted war itself into a crucible in which were fused into unity of sentiment the opposing peoples.

Of this the most recent instance has been afforded by the experience of Britain in the war with the Boers in South Africa. The indignation and loathing which that war inspired in the heart of the English party which gloried in the title of pro-Boer was the most potent of all the influences which saved South Africa for the Empire. The party which at last General Election was entrusted with the government of the Empire was bound together with war-forged links of mutual sympathy and mutual detestation with the South Africa Dutch. No men in the Empire rejoiced with more sombre satisfaction and grim exultation over the victories of de Wet and Delarey than some of the men who are now ministers of the Crown in London, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, and Cape-town. This community of sentiment between a party in opposition to war, actual or menaced, and the nation who is threatened or attacked, is very strong, and in her appeal to this lay the secret of Madame Novikoff's power.

There are times when nations, or the majority which dominates their action, seem to go stark, staring mad. In England we passed through two such visitations of lunacy in the last thirty years. The first was when, in Lord Salisbury's rueful phrase, we backed the wrong horse in supporting the cause of the Unspeakable Turk against the Bulgarians struggling to be free. The second was when Lord Milner and Mr. Chamberlain plunged us into war with the Boers. In both cases the party which had tried to stem the frenzy of the popular passions was installed in power at the next

General Election. In both cases they found their task of negotiating with their late enemies materially facilitated by the fact that during the hour of national delirium they had been not enemies but friends.

No doubt it seemed to many at the time a curious service to render to England in the critical time of 1876–78, to impress upon the Russians that England was not unanimous, that Lord Beaconsfield was paralysed by the agitation of Mr. Gladstone; and for the moment, no doubt, nothing could have been more irritating to the party in power. But when that party fell, its successful rival reaped the fruit of the good seed sown amid storms. It may be said that the preaching of such doctrines encouraged Russia to presume upon the partly induced paralysis of England. That was a risk that had to be taken. But it was a small risk; and, as the result proved, the real danger lay altogether on the other side. Europe has suffered for thirty years, and is suffering to this hour, from the fact that in the settlement of Bulgaria Russia was not sufficiently encouraged to insist upon carrying out the policy of San Stefano.

Madame Novikoff incurred the condemnation of the more rabid "patriots" of both nations. There are, unfortunately, many in every nation to whom the negation of every principle of Christianity and every dictate of reason and prudence appear the sole test of genuine patriotism. They see "red" when their "natural enemy" appears on the scene, and their one conception of strategy and diplomacy is that of the bull in the Spanish arena—eyes shut, head down, and a blind rush in the direction of the scarlet cloak. In bull-fights no one tries to open the eyes of the bull. If they did, the infuriated animal would probably resent the efforts of his enlightener

much as our Jingoes resented the writings of Madame Novikoff. But the bull never escapes his doom.

The rôle of Madame Novikoff was not merely that of an apostle. She was quite as useful as an interpreter. She may, and indeed did, in many cases fail to convert the British public to her way of thinking; she never failed to interpret to them the Russian point of view. We might, and often did, refuse to agree with her; but we were at least able to realise where she stood. Russia with Madame Novikoff became an intelligible proposition. It might be objectionable; it was never beyond our comprehension. And that in itself was a great gain. National rivalries and antagonisms are never so dangerous as when the action of the other side appears to be due to sheer superfluity of naughtiness. The moment we begin to comprehend that if we had been in their shoes we should have acted much in the same way as they were acting, the most dangerous explosive is damped down. In the performance of this task of interpretation Madame Novikoff was admirably qualified alike by her qualities and the defects of these qualities. She was liberal enough to be able to realise the standpoint of the Western constitutionalists; she was conservative enough to share the views of the *Moscow Gazette*. Those who most deplore her sympathy with M. Gringmuth and Mr. Katkoff of the *Moscow Gazette* must realise that without that solidarity with the old Russian national sentiment she would have been as impotent an intermediary between the two nations as any of the Nihilist colony which in London and other capitals nurtured hatred and distrust.

To interpret Russia to the Western World—that is a task from which the boldest might shrink.

Madame Novikoff achieved it without effort simply by being herself. She was Russian to the core—Russian in her idealism, Russian in her chivalrous spirit of self-sacrifice, Russian in her shrinking from the infliction of physical pain, Russian too in her moments of depression and despair. Passionately patriotic, hereditarily Orthodox, capable of long-sustained exertion alternating with fits of lassitude, she was Russia in microcosm living in the heart of London. No one was less of a Nihilist than she, but she was of the stuff of which Revolutionists are made. Not even her most impassioned invectives against the Anarchist could prevent her interpreting to us the soul of the Russian, whose explosive enthusiasm has filled Siberia with exiles. She deplored the heresies, which she regarded as most harmful to Russia, but admired the literary genius of Tolstoy, and she was the first to introduce to the British public his beautiful parable, "What makes men to live." There is in her a spirit that was hardly Russian, that was more English than Russian, that came to her through her early education and was strengthened by her long sojourn in our midst. She is much more practical and direct than most of her countrymen, whether in diplomacy or in journalism, and much more keenly alive than they to the importance of setting Russia right with the outside world. Russians as a rule, especially official Russians, are almost as indifferent as the English to the opinion of their neighbours. Such indifference, whether due to natural pride or to lack of imagination, is a serious danger to peace. It permits misunderstandings, born of ignorance, to grow until they culminate in war.

"They say, what do they say, let them say," has been the motto of the Russian Government in dealing

with the hostile criticisms of the foreigner. It was with the utmost difficulty that I was able from time to time to obtain official refutations of the most damaging libels either from the Russian Embassy or the Russian Foreign Office. Mr. Gladstone's letters show how impatiently he chafed against the lethargic indifference of Russian officialdom to charges which they might easily have refuted. Madame Novikoff was enough of an Occidental to see the folly of allowing all manner of falsehoods free course to run without refutation. She laboured diligently in season and out of season to supply an antidote to the poison systematically disseminated in the Press by the enemies of her country. No better service could have been rendered to mankind in general, and to England in particular, than this constant reminder that the 140 millions who inhabit the Russian Empire were human, and being human, had as much claim as ourselves to share in the Divine inheritance of the children of God.

Madame Novikoff never confined herself to apologetics. From the first day of her arrival in London she was always defiantly Muscovite. There were in those days—perhaps the breed is not even yet extinct—some quasi-Russians who in the capitals of the West seemed to be more or less ashamed to claim connection with Russia. Although from Russia, they were not of Russia, and they were careful to disclaim any connection with everything that was distinctively Russian. Madame Novikoff took exactly the opposite course. From the first she gloried in being a Russian, and she selected as her special object of devotion the Autocracy which the West detested, the Orthodoxy which it derided, the Slavonic nationality which it feared.

Russian women are remarkable for their self-sacrificing enthusiasm. Many of the distinguishing

traits of the best of them may be discerned in the campaign of Madame Novikoff. Realising instinctively that there is no defensive so effective as a vigorous offensive, she habitually carried the war into the enemy's camp. It must be admitted that her opponents delivered themselves into her hands. There is hardly a single high crime and misdemeanour charged against Russia which England could not be proved to have committed on an even greater scale. When English critics cavilled against Russian expansion, the map of the world sufficed Madame Novikoff to prove that it was a case of the Devil reproving sin. There is still a lamentable store of Pharisaism left in these islands, but the Pecksniffs of Fleet Street are not quite so ready nowadays to insist upon extracting the mote from the eyes of their neighbours since Madame Novikoff reminded them so sarcastically of the beam in the eye of John Bull. Two blacks, it may be admitted, do not make a white, but when the pot is refusing to have anything to do with the kettle, it is sometimes useful to remind the supercilious pot that its complexion is also that of an Ethiop. If Madame Novikoff, with all her ingenuity and resource, was compelled at times to admit that her countrymen were not exactly saints, she never lacked the satisfaction of showing that their censors also had sinned and come far short. The communion of saints being unattainable, the communion of sinners was the next best thing. Whether saints or sinners, communion is better than excommunication. Upon this common consciousness of common humanity bearing a common burden and confronting common difficulties, Madame Novikoff based her earnest plea for an entente cordiale between the two great Empires of Russia and Britain. Nor did she hesitate to reinforce her appeal by warnings

as to the potential danger to England and to her Empire that lurked in persistent cultivation of an anti-Russian sentiment. She did not menace, she warned. The greatness, the power, and the resources of the Russian Empire, the immense promise of its future, although never offensively insisted upon, were ever present in the background of her arguments. "Knowing the terrors of the law," said the Apostle, "thereby I persuade men." In the same spirit Madame Novikoff endeavoured to persuade Englishmen that they might face the dangers of the future with more confidence if they refrained from the luxury of constantly thwarting, insulting, and antagonising the Empire that shares with them the dominion of Asia.

All that is obvious commonplace to-day. The imbecility of going out of our way to make enemies of Russia is a truism recognised even by the newspaper oracles of the man in the street. But when Madame Novikoff began her apostolate this truism of to-day was regarded as a pestilent heresy. Russia was then, in the opinion of the fool-multitude, our natural enemy. "Russia delenda est," was the parrot cry of a million English Catos. Nor was that the only parallel between Russia and Carthage. Punic faith was believed to be paralleled or outdone by Muscovite perfidy. The Colossus of the North was constantly denounced as the standing menace of the liberty of the civilisation of the world. The mythical will of Peter the Great was invoked to justify the assertion that the Russian Government regarded the conquest of India as the great objective of its traditional policy.

Everything that is said nowadays about the ambitious designs and the ruthless policy of Germany was said then about Russia. Germanophobists are at a disadvantage because Germany has never crossed

swords with England. But in 1876, when Madame Novikoff began to write, only twenty years divided us from the fall of Sebastopol. Her first great friend in this country was still labouring over the unfinished history of the war in the Crimea. Most of the men whom she rallied to her banner had been directly or indirectly responsible for that war. And to add to the difficulties of the task, it seemed as if another war in the East was brewing in which the interest of Russia and England would once more be in violent opposition.

Madame Novikoff would be the last person in the world to claim that the great transformation in English public opinion that has been effected in the last thirty years was wrought by her apostolate of goodwill. No one can say, "Alone I did it." The utmost that any individuals can claim when a great change in the current of national sentiment has taken place, is that they from first to last strenuously turned the whole of their energy in the right direction. It is Madame Novikoff's peculiar and unique claim to the grateful recognition of the nations, that she more consistently, more persistently, and more conspicuously than any other human being maintained in both countries the cause of the Anglo-Russian Entente. And that being the case, I am justified in claiming her right to be recognised as the real heroine of a great international rapprochement, the most outstanding figure of influence among all those who contributed to replace enmity by co-operation, to make foes into friends.

The current of popular passion in England, as interpreted by the majority of its newspapers and expressed by its Government, was repeatedly opposed by Madame Novikoff; and in every case the verdict

of history has been given in favour of the cause which she defended. If in the first great crisis the leading part in the campaign of goodwill was taken by Mr. Gladstone, with half the nation at his back, she was even then his most effective ally. But in the second crisis, which arose over the fight at Penjdeh on the Afghan frontier, the Novikoff contingent fought almost alone. Mr. Gladstone himself was then threatening war. Madame Novikoff fought for peace against Mr. Gladstone in 1885, as nine years before with his aid she had fought against Lord Beaconsfield. In the third crisis, the storm that suddenly blew up out of the Dogger Bank incident, even Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman lost his head for a moment, but Madame Novikoff stood firm. It is a great record. Even from the English patriotic point of view, Madame Novikoff's action in all these three crises was most useful. Better than any of the passionate exponents of national pride and national interests, she divined and proclaimed that the true policy for the British Empire lay with a hearty Entente with Russia, a policy which now, with unanimous voice, has been enthusiastically approved by the whole nation. England has opened its eyes to-day to see the truth that Madame Novikoff proclaimed thirty years ago. For Russia, in the whole wide field of foreign policy, no Russian has done so much in our time, or will be remembered with such honour by the generations which are to come. To vindicate the character and to justify the policy of a nation in the very camp of its most inveterate foes, is a task seldom imposed upon any individual, and never upon a woman. But it was assumed by Madame Novikoff, and never was higher duty more brilliantly, more conscientiously, and more completely performed.

APPENDIX A

THE TRADITIONAL POLICY OF RUSSIA.

(From *Russia and England*, 1880.)

"WHAT is the Traditional Policy of Russia?

"The Traditional Policy of Russia is an alliance with England!

"Long before Russia bowed beneath the Tartar yoke, our reigning Prince, Vladimir Monomachus, married Gyda, daughter of your noble Harold, who fell on the fatal field of Senlac.

"The Tartar invasion, lasting nearly three centuries, did not favour communications, much less an alliance, between Russia and England. But after we got rid of the Tartars, Ivan the Fourth, graphically surnamed the Terrible, sent an Embassy to your Queen Elizabeth to negotiate a close alliance with England, and, according to several historians, he was even anxious to marry her. Your Queen, however, preferring 'single blessedness,' refused, and the death of Ivan IV. brought the negotiations to an end.

"Since then matrimonial ties were not spoken of for nearly three hundred years, but many efforts have been made by us to establish a cordial

understanding by other means between the two nations.[1]

"Our efforts, however, have too often been paralysed by lying legends and calumnies invented by our enemies to prejudice the ignorant against us. One of these,—perhaps the most famous,—the spurious will of Peter the Great, written nearly a hundred years after Peter's death by the ingenious Frenchman Lesur, is frequently appealed to as the most convincing proof of Russia's wickedness: nevertheless, forgery though it is, it contains one point which was well adapted to Russian views, viz. the Seventh Article, which is as follows: 'Seek the alliance of England, on account of our commerce, as being the country most useful to us for the development of our navy and mercantile marine, and for the exchange of our produce against her gold.'

"Russian Emperors have always been of the opinion that Russia and England are natural allies, even although circumstances have occasionally thrown them into temporary antagonism to a mistaken English policy.

"Up to the very outbreak of the Crimean War, our Emperor Nicholas was most sincerely anxious to be 'upon terms of closest amity with England.' In his famous conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour that anxious desire was most manifest.[2]

[1] It is curious to find that, almost in the first sentence of the first Speech from the Throne after the accession of Mr. Disraeli's Government to office, the Queen speaks as follows:—

"My relations with all foreign Powers continue to bemost friendly. . . . The marriage of my son, the Duke of Edinburgh, with the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrowna of Russia, is at once a source of happiness to myself and a pledge of friendship between two great Empires."

[2] "You know my opinions with regard to England. Were we agreed, I am quite without anxiety as to the west of Europe; it is immaterial what the others may think or do." Again, in January

" Mr. Kinglake says :—

" ' The Emperor Nicholas had laid down for himself a rule, which was always to guide his conduct on the Eastern Question, and it seems to be certain that at this time (the eve of the Turkish War of 1653), even in his most angry moments, he intended to cling to his resolve. What he had determined was that no temptation should draw him into hostile conflict with England.' [1]

" As to the attitude of Russia before the late war, even our most exacting critics admit that our Emperor could not possibly have done more than he did to secure the alliance and the co-operation of England. The Livadia dispatch was but the culmination of a long series of similar overtures for English friendship—overtures which, I regret to say, met with but cool and scanty responses from your Government.

" In making these advances, our Government was only carrying out the ancient, the traditional policy of Russia. The change has been with you, not with us.

" At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Boris Godounoff sent an envoy to London to urge that England should unite with Russia and other Christian powers to subdue the Turks and free the Christians of the East.

" During the eighteenth century, the two Powers were frequently in alliance both in peace and in war. On one occasion Russian soldiers garrisoned the Channel Islands. On another, Russian fleets were refitted in English dockyards. English admirals often

1853, alluding to the probable fall of Turkey: " It is very important that England and Russia should come to a perfectly good understanding upon these affairs, and that neither should take any decisive step of which the other is not apprised."

[1] *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. i. p. 199.

commanded Russian navies, while Russian and English soldiers, as faithful allies, fought side by side on many a hard-contested field.

"The great statesmen of both countries recognised the importance of the Anglo-Russian alliance. Our minister, M. Panin, in 1766 informed the envoy of your Earl of Chatham that he entertained 'the strongest desire of entering into the strictest engagements and the most intimate friendships with England, being convinced that my policy could neither be solid nor perfect unless Great Britain were a party to it.' It was the repeatedly declared conviction of Prince Potemkin that the union of Russia and England was absolutely essential to the peace of the East.

"That conviction has been strengthened rather than weakened by the history of the last hundred years. Prince Worontzoff, our Ambassador at the Court of St. James, was a devoted advocate of the Anglo-Russian Alliance, and his convictions are shared by the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Gortschakoff.

"The most illustrious English statesmen concurred with Prince Potemkin and M. Panin in the value they placed on the alliance between the two countries. Chatham was not ashamed to declare that 'he was altogether a Russian.' Fox, Burke, even Pitt, as well as Canning and others nearer our time, have either concluded treaties of friendship with Russia or expressed themselves as most favourable to the Russian alliance.[1]

"It is not a century since it was the custom to refer

[1] "The Whigs of that day (after the Congress of Vienna) were not behind the Tories in their devotion to the Czar. It may perhaps be more correctly said that the alliance with Russia received especially the approval of that distinguished section of the Whigs who followed in the footsteps of Charles Fox."—*Thirty Years of Foreign Policy*, pp. 61–62.

to Russia in Parliament as 'the natural, ancient, and traditional ally of England.'

"In the great crisis of European history, England and Russia were the foremost opponents of the Emperor Napoleon, and it was to their joint endeavours that Europe owed the overthrow of the ascendancy of France.

"You have now occupied Cyprus as 'a strong place of arms' to menace Russia, but your previous Mediterranean occupation—that of the Ionian Islands—was undertaken at the suggestion of your Russian ally. Nor did you always dread Russia as a Mediterranean power, for England has insisted upon our fleet entering that sea, and once negotiations were even begun to cede us a naval station at Minorca, then an English possession.

"Is it not a remarkable proof of the utility of the Russian alliance, that on two occasions, when the English Government so far forgot its true interests as to threaten to make war upon Russia, the war should have been prevented by the vigorous protests of the English people?[1]

"The instinct of the nation was wiser than the statecraft of its rulers, and the English succeeded on both occasions in doing that all but impossible thing —even in constitutional countries—of restraining a Prime Minister who was bent on going to war. We are not ungrateful for the generous sympathies and natural friendliness of the English people. We only regret that in two important crises of your history your Constitutional Government so misrepresented your real feelings as to render it necessary, to prevent war, to overrule your Ministry by an almost revolutionary agitation.

[1] 1791 and 1876.

"When Empress Catherine II. heard of the services which Mr. Fox had rendered to the cause of humanity in restraining Mr. Pitt from making war upon Russia about Otchakoff, she placed his bust between those of Cicero and Demosthenes, exclaiming, 'Il a delivré par son eloquence la patrie et la Russie d'une guerre, pour la quelle il n'y avait ni justice, ni raisons.'

"Mr. Fox, in his place in Parliament, expressed himself highly gratified by the distinction conferred upon him by the Empress, and made the memorable declaration: 'With regard to Russia, it has ever been my opinion that she was the Power in Europe with whom the cultivation of reciprocal ties of friendship, both commercial and political, was most natural and of the greatest consequence to this country.'

"Now, if Russians venture to express their gratitude to an English statesman whose eloquence, like that of Mr. Fox, has indeed delivered both countries from a senseless war, he is decried as a 'Russian agent' and a traitor to his country. The change is not exactly an improvement, nor is it calculated to strengthen good feeling on either side.

"Englishmen may yet discover that these prejudices against us are detrimental to their interests. Seventy years ago an English author declared that 'Russia, the most powerful, the most natural, the most useful of our allies, has so intimate a connection of interests with us that the soundest policy must dictate to us a union *ou désign* and co-operation in action.'[1] If that were true then, how much more so must it be now, for since then we have divided Asia between us?

"Even Lord Palmerston, when the Crimean War was still an affair of yesterday, declared to our Ambassador, Count Chreptovitch, that Russia and

[1] Eton's *Survey of the Turkish Empire*, p. 404.

England 'had great interests in common; and that as long as they did not come into collision about Turkey or Persia, there was no reason why they should not act in concert on many important matters.'[1]

"To Russians, it seems that the danger of a collision about the affairs of these countries is the greatest of reasons why the two Powers should act in concert.

"Russia has always particularly sought for concert with England in dealing with Turkey. Much as the Russian Government desired the English alliance which Lord Chatham pressed upon us, it was refused unless England would act in concert with us in Turkish affairs. That principle, rejected by Chatham, was accepted by Pitt in 1795. Only four years after he had been threatening us with war, a treaty was concluded which conceded that principle of common action in the Levant for which Russia had never ceased to contend.

"Is not that fact a happy augury for the future? Four years after the War Vote of 1791 the two Powers entered into a close alliance. Who knows but the same thing may happen within four years of the War Vote of 1878?

"Even during this century Russia and England have oftener been friends than foes. In the Napoleonic wars the English fleet menaced Constantinople because the Turks had declared war against Russia. It was not in Russia that the battle of Navarino was condemned as 'an untoward event,' and in 1877, in spite of the bitterness occasioned by the war, we celebrated its Jubilee with enthusiasm.

"As we fought together against the Turks, so we have also, I regret to say, been allied in support of the Sultan. When Mehemet Ali threatened to over-

[1] Ashley's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 116.

turn the Ottoman Empire, Russian troops occupied Constantinople, while an English fleet cruised off the coast of Syria.

"The Crimean War was indeed an 'untoward event,' but the dispatches of Lord John Russell, before war broke out, bore repeated testimony to the earnestness and sincerity with which our Emperor laboured to establish a good understanding and concerted action with England in the affairs of Turkey.

"Since the Peace of Paris, in 1856, Russia has never been at war with England, while she has frequently energetically seconded English policy.

"At the Conference of Constantinople, General Ignatieff abandoned his own scheme of reforms in order to give a more effectual support to that of Lord Salisbury; and, after the Conference failed, Russia exhausted every diplomatic expedient to preserve the Concert with England before she drew the sword.

"Not until it was seen that the only concert with England was concert in inaction, with all wrongs unredressed and all the Slavs left in slavery, did Russia act alone.

"But even when compelled unassisted to do single-handed the duty of all Europe, Russia displayed the most scrupulous regard for 'British Interests.' Ascertaining them from Lord Derby at the beginning of the war, Russia brought the contest to a triumphant close without threatening a single point specified by your Foreign Minister.

"We sent you our terms of peace before we crossed the Danube, and we sent you the Treaty of San Stefano as soon as it reached St. Petersburg.

"At the Berlin Congress, Russia gave way repeatedly

to satisfy England's demands, and surrendered all exclusive privileges, in order to act in concert with Europe.

"How England rewarded this I need not say. But unless we surrendered the Christians of the East to the vengeance of the Turk, we could do no more. In fact, truly speaking, we went even too far. The aspirations, the ardent wishes of the Russian people have been sacrificed for your friendship. One step more would be almost treason to our brethren—a betrayal of our duty. Such a price could not be paid—no !—not even for the purchase of the English alliance.

"If England, if the English people identify their interests with the maintenance of Turkish power over all the peoples south of the Balkans, then I reluctantly admit that any alliance between us is impossible. As has frequently been said, 'At any cost, without even counting the cost,' Russia must do her duty. For us, there is no choice possible between the Slavs and their oppressors. Some of our officials, estranged from their own nation by their false education, dislike the very name of Slavs ; but as long as there is the slightest link between them and the Russian people, even they would not dare so far to forget their duty as to sanction an alliance on such terms.

"Russians know well that nothing great can be obtained without sacrifices. If new sacrifices are needed, what does it prove ? Only that we have not done enough. No power on earth can stop the natural development of events. The future of the Slavonic world is as clear to us as the path of honour which we have to follow.

"But are we to believe that the English people,

after all their protestations of sympathy with the Eastern Christians, will insist upon such a shameful price for their alliance as a support of the Turkish power ?

" It is impossible !

" I look forward confidently to the conclusion of a good understanding between Russia and England, based upon the peaceful but effective elimination of Turkish authority from Europe.

" Only on that basis is real alliance possible.

" And so with the farther East. Co-partners in the work of civilising Asia, our entente cordiale is the key to the peace of the Continent.

" Destroy it, and from Constantinople to Japan there will be ceaseless intrigues, insurrections, and war.

" Mr. J. Anthony Froude, whose courageous advocacy of an Anglo-Russian alliance dates back to the dark times of the Crimean War, expressed this truth very clearly when he wrote in his admirable *Short Studies on Great Subjects*: ' We may be sure that if it was understood in the East that Russia and England, instead of enemies were cordial friends, that they recognised each other's position and would assist each other in difficulties, the imagination of resistance would be quenched in the certainty of its hopelessness.'

" It is not sufficient that we should not be at open war, to secure peace in Asia. We must be staunch friends, and act in cordial concert within our respective spheres. The Oriental world is convulsed with war when Russia and England are in opposition. Cross-purposes between St. Petersburg and London may be confined to dispatches in Europe, but they result in crossed swords in Persia and Afghanistan.

"The only hope of barbarism in Asia lies in discord between the two civilising Empires. If we are united, civilisation is safe; but a policy of antagonism, even although we do not draw the sword, may end in restoring Asia to the Asiatics.

"Believe me, it is not Russia who will suffer most by persistence in this policy of hostility and suspicion. Our stake in Asia is trivial compared with yours. Turkestan entails a costly drain upon our exchequer, nor can we import Turkomans to make war on Europe. With you in India it is different. We do not want India. We could not take India if we did want it. But when the visit of a single Russian envoy to Cabul induces you to undertake a costly, useless war, what hope is there of peaceful progress, and the development of civilisation in the East, if the two Powers are to be permanently estranged?

"Lord Napier and Ettrick, who, after he had left his Ambassador's post at St. Petersburg, was considered as a decided Russophobist, referring, on December 9, 1878, in his speech in Parliament to the Russian mission to Cabul, frankly said :—

"'Russia had moved forward in the direction of national sympathies and aspirations of the people, and with consummate prudence. With a country so constituted, it was necessary to employ judicious means for securing amity, if not absolutely alliance; and the best means the Government could employ was an absolute plainness and frankness, so that Russia should not be in any doubt as to the course we should pursue with reference to Afghanistan. He thought that, after the termination of the war, there should be a definite treaty between England and Russia, as it would be likely to have a tranquillising effect upon India.'

"Our interests are identical, our mission is the same; why, then, can we not revert to the traditional policy of Russia, and become once more firm allies and good friends?

"It is not only in Asia that the two nations stand side by side. In Europe we occupy similar ground in resisting the authority of Papal Rome; each in our own way, we protest against the corruptions and abuses of the Vaticanate Church.

"Thus presenting a common front, alike against the Mohammedan barbarism of Asia and the spiritual despotism of Europe, is it not time that we should frankly recognise the similarity of our mission, and loyally support each other in the face of the common foe?

"'The Russians,' says Mr. Froude, 'though our rivals in the East, had in Europe, till the outbreak of the Crimean War, been our surest allies.' Even since then, English Cabinets have had no reason to regret the existence of Russia in Europe. It is not so many years ago that Lord Beaconsfield's Government allied itself with the Russian Empire to prevent a renewal of the Franco-German war, and I believe it was Lord Beaconsfield who pointed, ten years ago, to an Anglo-Russian alliance as a means of preventing Napoleon's march *à Berlin*, which terminated so disastrously at Sedan.

"We are also united in the great humanitarian crusade against slavery and the slave trade.

"You look back with pride to the abolition of slavery in your colonies; we glory in the emancipation of our serfs—that measure which for ever secured our gratitude to Emperor Alexander, who understood and supported the best aspirations of his people.

"It is your proud boast that slaves cannot breathe

upon English soil. It is not less true of Russia, who for the last hundred years has waged unceasing war against the slave trade, both in Europe and in Asia. It was our conquest of the Crimea which suppressed the market in which Polish and Russian captives were sold like cattle by the Mussulman, and the first-fruits of our entry into Khiva was the release of all the slaves in the Khanate.

"But why enter into details? Whether it is in the field of exploration, or in the domain of science, or in any other of the numberless departments of our complex civilisation, you will find that Russians are fellow-workers with you, neither unfriendly nor unworthy.

"Why, then, should you persist in regarding us as worse than declared enemies?—A very intelligent friend of mine, who has enjoyed unusual opportunities of studying Russian and English policy, writes to me :—

" 'The popular clamour against Russia in England is not only unjust but childish and contemptible, and defeats its own purpose. To tell you the truth, I sometimes blush for the half-childish, half-brutal national egotism of a great part of my countrymen. If we have to fight, let us do so and be done with it, respecting each other as honourable opponents, but (like yourself) I do not see the least necessity for fighting. It would be folly in England to go to war to put on his legs the incurably Sick Man, and it would be equally foolish of Russia to go to war in order to accelerate by a few years the inevitable death of the patient. How many difficulties might be removed by a genuine understanding between Russia and England!'

"Why should there not be such an understanding

between us ? Surely it has been sufficiently proved that we could do each other a great deal of harm, although not without injuring many a noble cause which we ought to serve, if we really care for Humanity and Civilisation.

" It is for you—not for us—now to decide whether we are to be Friends or Foes ! "

APPENDIX B

A NATION'S PROTEST AGAINST WAR.

(From the *Northern Echo* of January 17, 1878.)

"ON the 19th of December 1877 it was announced that Parliament was to meet three weeks earlier than usual. Meetings were held all over the country to demand the preservation of a strict neutrality, and to deprecate any intervention in the war between Russia and Turkey. The first note of alarm was sounded by the Chambers of Commerce, as the trade of the country was seriously injured by the rumours of Lord Beaconsfield's warlike intentions, which seemed to gain confirmation by the early summoning of Parliament. Town Councils followed suit. A great number of Nonconformist Associations united their prayers with those of other bodies. Towns' meetings, summoned by the Mayors in compliance with requisitions from the burgesses, were held in great numbers. Public meetings, not so formally convened, were held in still greater numbers. Resolutions of neutrality were passed at meetings between members and their constituents. Liberal Associations also petitioned against intervention; but, as we have always maintained that resolutions passed by the executive com-

mittees of political organisations afford absolutely no indication of the opinion of the country, we do not include such strictly party manifestoes in reckoning up the protests of the nation against war. Excluding these, the following list of meetings constitutes probably the most overwhelming manifestation of national opinion ever evoked at so short a notice in so brief a time—for, owing to the Christmas holidays, little was done before the New Year :—

"CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

Birmingham	Falmouth	Liverpool
Bradford	Gloucester	Manchester
Bristol	Halifax	Plymouth
Darlington	Leeds	Wick
Edinburgh		

"Sheffield and Newcastle Chambers refused to express any opinion on the matter.

"TOWN COUNCILS.

Beverley	Gloucester	Musselburgh
Birmingham	Kilmarnock	Newport (Mon.)
Burnley	Leeds	Nottingham
Bury	Leominster	Oldham
Cardiff	Manchester	Peterhead
Crewe	Mexborough	Rochdale
Darwen	Middlesbrough	Rochester
Falmouth	Montrose	

"Accrington Local Board, by a majority of one, refused to consider the question. A neutrality resolution has been placed on the notice paper of the Glasgow City Council.

"TOWNS' MEETINGS.

Aberdeen	Darlington	Manchester
Aberdare	Edinburgh	Merthyr
Bath	Falmouth	Northampton
Bishop Auckland	Galashiels	Reading
Boston	Gourock	Rochdale
Bradford	Hawick	Sheffield
Burnley	Holmfirth	Stockton
Carlisle	Huddersfield	Truro
Chelsea	Leeds	York
	Macclesfield	

"Excepting the meeting at Oldham, the majority in these meetings was overwhelming where it was not unanimous. Only two towns' meetings have rejected neutrality resolutions, viz. those at Devonport and at Salford, but in both cases the opposition declared that Her Majesty's Ministers had pledged themselves to neutrality, and appealed for confidence in their policy on that ground.

"MEMBERS' MEETINGS.

Birmingham	Gateshead	Reading
Blackburn	Gloucester	Richmond
Bolton	Hackney	Stockport
Bury	Kendal	Sunderland
Chelsea	Leicester	Taunton
Denbigh	Manchester	

"At these meetings between members and their constituents neutrality resolutions were formally voted. The meeting at Scarborough is postponed till Monday. In many cases—as, for instance, in the Border Burghs—although the audience was entirely at one with the neutrality speeches of Mr. Trevelyan, their sentiments were not embodied in a formal resolution. The same

may be said of Halifax, which cordially voted its confidence in its members after very emphatic peace speeches.

"PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Accrington
Barnsley
Boosbeck
Brighouse
Bristol
Brotton
Brymbo
Burslem
Cardiff
Cheetham
Croydon
Darwen
Dowlais
Evesham
Ewell
Eye
Golcar
Guisbrough
Kirkby Stephen
Lambeth
Lindley
Loftus
London: Trafalgar Square, Exeter Hall, Clerkenwell Green, Southwark, etc. etc.
Luton
Maldon
Manchester
Medomsley
Middlesbrough
Neath
Newcastle
Norwich
Sacriston
Salisbury
Saltburn
St. Albans
St. Ives
Stanhope
Thirsk
Warrington
Wednesbury
West Bromwich
Westminster
Wheatley Hill

"Most of these meetings were specially summoned for the consideration of the Eastern Question; but in one or two cases, such as the annual meeting of the National Reform Union in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, the resolution demanding neutrality was introduced after the original programme had been issued.

"OTHER MEETINGS.

"The Boards of Guardians of Luton and of West Bromwich have petitioned against intervention. The Cleveland Miners' Association, the Northumberland Miners' Association, the London Builders' Labourers' Union, the Labour League, and the National Agricultural Labourers' Union have all protested against

any abandonment of a policy of neutrality. Mr. Joseph Arch said that thirty meetings a night for five nights in the week have been held by the labourers in the rural districts to protest against war. The Glasgow Working Men's Liberal Association has memorialised Government against war. The Liberal Associations of Barrow, Cambridge, Cheltenham, Chichester, Hull, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Wolverhampton have contented themselves with adopting resolutions against intervention without taking the trouble to enlist in their support the masses of the people in these towns who would have been ready to back them up if they had only had an opportunity. Nonconformist Associations have been very active.

"WAR MEETINGS.

"There have only been three war meetings. The first, in Trafalgar Square, was a miserable failure. A mob of roughs, after a free fight, were supposed to vote resolutions, which were quite inaudible in the din. The second, at Newcastle, was a complete fiasco, the chairman not daring to submit the resolution to the meeting for its acceptance or rejection, but impudently declaring it carried amid a storm of disapprobation. The third meeting was that in St. James's Hall, to which no one was admitted save by ticket."

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